

A LAGGARD IN LOVE."

By JEANIE GWINNIE BETTANY,
AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF BIMMON," ETC.

COMPLETE.

NOVEMBER, 1890

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NOVEMBER, 1890.

“A LAGGARD IN LOVE.”

CHAPTER I.

CECIL CALVERLEY TAKES A BULL BY THE HORNS.

“AND now, Victoria, tell me what you think of him.”

“Well, to begin with, Violet,” Victoria Lascelles made answer, with one of her fine smiles which always mystified people,—they were so magnetic, so incomprehensible,—“Well, to begin with, Violet, your brother is certainly handsome,—and he knows it.”

“Yes; and next?” queried Violet Calverley, trying to search the inscrutable depths of her friend’s fun-lit eyes.

“Next,” said Victoria, “I think you may confidently expect that young man to do something extraordinary.”

“Oh, Vic, I thought you would appreciate him,” cried Violet. “Mamma and I always say Cecil was born to do something extraordinary.”

“But you may not like it when it is done,” went on Victoria, gravely.

“Not like it, Victoria! What can you mean?” said Violet, reproachfully. “That sounds like one of papa’s remarks; and you know he doesn’t appreciate Cecil a bit.”

“Which is more than made up for by Aunt Agatha’s and your over-appreciation of him,” added Victoria.

“Now you’re going to turn disagreeable, as you did sometimes at school,” pouted Violet; “and you only came last night,—and I did think—” Violet did not finish her sentence, for Victoria interrupted her with, “My dear little Violet, you mean well, but all your small machinations are as transparent as glass. You want me to marry this brother of yours; and, my dear, I guess you have to cuirass yourself against a disappointment.”

The two girls who took part in the above conversation were cousins. Mrs. Calverley had been one of four sisters noted more for their per-

sonal charms than for the antiquity of their lineage. Mrs. Calverley had married a bookworm who chiefly inhabited his library, but who was possessed of a comfortable little income, which enabled his family to spend part of the year at a pleasant if not very large country-house among the Surrey Hills, and to take a house in London for the season. Two other sisters had married brothers,—Frenchmen by birth, though not by descent, and rich. One of these sisters was Victoria's mother, who had died at her birth, and given place to an American step-mother, for whom Victoria was just now wearing mourning. The remaining sister had made so little use of the advantages nature had given her as to allow herself to be married by a Methodist minister of the Wesleyan persuasion, who could offer her nothing beyond an unselfish attachment and a little villa, or small house in a row as it might chance, in the town or village in which he might be appointed to reside, at each recurring three years. Added to this there was the grand advantage afforded by an opportunity to practise the virtue of economy, for which neither Mrs. Calverley nor her sisters had any natural predilection.

Mrs. Calverley and her two sensible sisters of course with one consent denominated the wife of the Rev. Mr. Lane a fool. Perhaps she was one. It is so difficult to distinguish wise people from fools. But if she were a fool, she was a happy one; and that is something. All wise people are not happy.

However, Mrs. Lane had to forego the society of her more fortunate sisters. Mrs. Calverley's contempt for her knew no bounds; and when Cecil was particularly anxious to exasperate his mother—and he was so at times—he would threaten to go and visit his aunt Isabella, whose husband was just now stationed in the Black Country of South Staffordshire. Cecil was at present an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was accomplished in the arts of pleasing women, managing a "funny," choosing a cigar, and dressing himself. He had one other accomplishment, though as yet the world knew it not. He wrote poetry. When Cecil wrote poetry, he felt quite noble,—and dreadfully misunderstood. He wanted a few conditions made for him, that was all, and then he might be another—well, let the reader here fill in the name of his favorite poet.

"Any girl might be proud to marry Cecil," Violet said, when she had sufficiently recovered from her surprise at her cousin's last remark to say anything. Her astonishment was not so much at the repudiation of her wishes as at the fact that Victoria had seen through her. How did Victoria manage to see through people and things? Well, there was one she did not see through,—that was Cecil; or why should she laugh at him as she had done last night when the girls had spent half an hour together in Victoria's dressing-room before retiring for the night? And then—what had she just said?

"A good many girls might be proud to marry Cecil, I dare say," said Victoria, "but I am not of the number; and I think whoever is would do well to wait."

"Wait for what?" demanded Violet.

"Till he has done the something extraordinary which I have predicted," returned Victoria.

The girls were sitting in the small blue drawing-room which opened into a conservatory, the more stately apartment, of which the general tone was yellow, being occupied by Mrs. Calverley and the vicar, who were deep in church-work discussions. Violet cast longing glances every now and then towards the portière which covered the door between the two drawing-rooms. Violet Calverley was fond of "church work," and Cecil sometimes called her Mr. Fairbank's curate. But Victoria Lascelles was a young woman of a different calibre. She had declined the honor of an introduction to Mr. Fairbank for this afternoon in her own fashion. "No, Aunt Agatha, thank you; not unless you wish it. I guess I've seen one before." So Violet had remained with her cousin and sacrificed herself.

It was scarcely surprising, perhaps, that Violet should be silent after Victoria's last remark. Victoria herself did not offer to break the silence, but regarded her cousin's face with an amused expression on her own.

The two were sitting thus when Cecil Calverley entered by the conservatory. He was attired in a wonderful velvet coat of a shade resembling purple pansies, and he wore a late white rose in his button-hole.

"I guess you are too good for this world, cousin," Victoria remarked, as he entered.

"In what sense?" inquired Cecil, with a laugh which revealed his white even teeth.

"You see," said Victoria, reflectively, "you ought to live in a world where there is no dust, and no rain, you are so fine. When we were small and we used to read Andersen's Tales, I remember you liked the story of The Darning-Needle who thought herself so fine. I liked the Brave Tin Soldier. Read them again, Cecil."

"I will, Vic," Cecil answered, pleasantly, pulling down a big palm leaf over his purple shoulder and looking smilingly upon them. "I remember when you came to spend your holidays here you used to snub me: I remember that much better than Andersen."

At this moment the voices of Mrs. Calverley and Mr. Fairbank became more audible.

"Who is in there with mother?" inquired Cecil, indicating the yellow drawing-room.

"Mr. Fairbank," said Violet: "he wants some of us to get up a concert in aid of the organ fund."

"Then," said Cecil, "I propose that we go for a walk towards Fenley Green. Mr. Fairbank is sure to wait for afternoon tea, and then we shall be in for a church congress."

"Good!" cried Victoria. "Come, Violet, let us get our hats. We will pick blackberries and eat them, instead of having tea. Heigh-ho for Bohemia!"

Cecil would probably have remained among the palms, to meditate, poet-fashion, with the aid of a cigarette, till the girls should be ready, but he caught the sound of the vicar's exit into the hall, and feared that his mother would come in his direction and prevent the walk he had proposed by some long dissertation or other relative to the small

church she patronized. He therefore departed and changed his coat for a tweed one which matched the rest of his attire, and awaited his sister and cousin in the "Shakespeare garden." This garden was so called from its containing a specimen of every flower mentioned in Shakespeare. It was the sweetest garden imaginable, with a multiplicity of narrow gravel paths running maze-like between fantastically-shaped flower-beds bordered with sweet old-fashioned thyme, box, or rosemary. Just now the dahlias, sunflowers, and hollyhocks were in full glory, and the scent of mignonette mingled noticeably with that of its more aromatic neighbors. The short carriage-drive ran along one side of this garden up to the porticoed front entrance. And down this drive Cecil saw the vicar walking leisurely enough, stopping every now and then to examine a tall white lily or a more than usually fine aster.

He (the vicar) had scarcely disappeared when the girls came in their neat walking-dresses, and the three set out for a walk across the heather. One hears a great deal about Scotch heather; but it is fully equalled by that which clothes some of the great stretches of heath land between the Surrey Hills with a purple garment fit for a king. How golden the sandy high-road appears, winding along between that blue sea of heath flowers, meeting by the way many a rival in the royal yellow of the gorse blooms! How deep a green the pines seem to take as they group together here and there in so bright a setting of color! And when at length you leave the heath and wander into the lanes beyond, what wild roses and honeysuckle greet you in spring, what blackberries in autumn! These royal denizens of the hedge-row are provided with a protecting moat, like other royal personages, that they may remain safe from intruding botanists and poets. Our pedestrians had reached one of these fortresses when Victoria reminded Cecil that they had elected to make blackberries their afternoon tea.

"The ditch is a little wide, don't you think?—and awkward?" Cecil said, as he looked at a branch of blackberries which Victoria had just indicated with her umbrella.

Victoria smiled, and Cecil slowly drew off one of his immaculate gloves and then peered into the dike suspiciously, conveying his gaze from thence to his patent-leather boots. "There are much finer blackberries farther on, cousin," he said, at length, as he stepped back into the road.

"Well, now, cousin, it is curious," said Victoria, slowly, "but I can't make up my mind to do without those particular blackberries." And without further ado she stepped close to the dike and with a light spring hooked down the branch with her umbrella, and returned to her cousins with her trophy in her hand and with no further damage to herself than a torn glove.

Cecil felt he would not be outdone by a girl. There was an angry flush on his face. Moreover, Violet stood laughing in a most provoking manner.

"There is a branch of finer berries higher up," he observed. "Shall I get them for you?" "By all means," said Victoria, with a wicked gleam in her eyes. "Here goes, then," said the young man. A moment more,—no

one could ever tell exactly how it happened,—and Cecil found himself seated in the running stream at the bottom of the dike, with numberless straggling blackberry trailers encircling him everywhere. In fact, only his head was visible,—his eyes most so, as he looked up indignant and reproachful from out his leafy and decidedly thorny ambush.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Calverley," said a voice from behind, and, turning, the girls beheld the vicar.

"I have been trying to overtake you," went on the reverend gentleman, good-humoredly: "I saw you in the distance. But I thought Mr. Cecil was with you?"

Cecil heard all this with a cold shudder and a prayer that Violet would somehow get rid of the clergyman without betraying his ignominious position.

Some words followed that we will not write,—as we wish to keep our pages unsullied,—which had impartial reference to "luck," "blackberries," "ditches," and—must it be owned (just for the sake of accuracy)?—to strong-minded young women whose chief pleasure seemed to be to make a fellow look ridiculous.

"Let me introduce my cousin," said Violet, who was really quite as anxious to conceal her brother's position as he could have been,—for well she knew how Mr. Fairbank loved to tell a good story after dinner; and he dined out a good deal, being a bachelor and deservedly popular, among the artists and literary folk who had taken up their abode in this delightful spot, which was also so conveniently near London.

"Let me introduce my cousin,—Miss Lascelles," Violet said. But Miss Lascelles suddenly jumped and screamed. She had only seen a frog; but even the most strong-minded among us have our antipathies. Our own is spiders; Victoria's was frogs.

Mr. Fairbank rushed to her side to look for a snake on the bank,—there are snakes in Surrey,—but all he saw was Cecil, hatless, scratched, shamefaced.

Of course there was nothing for it but to come out now. So Cecil arose from his watery bed, and apologized that he had not a hand to offer his vicar, both being a little too muddy. There is nothing like making the best of it, when you are once fairly caught: so Cecil affected an air of jocularity as he climbed the bank, and confessed with charming frankness that he had hoped to escape exhibiting his muddiness more than necessary, so had adopted "Brer Fox's" method in "Uncle Remus," and "lain low."

"Well," said the vicar, who was not devoid of imagination, "one may even tire of an Italian sky: it is quite interesting and instructive to see Mr. Cecil Calverley with other than faultless attire."

Cecil felt humiliated, and angry with himself. He now saw that if he had laughed and climbed up the bank at once on falling, his position would have been materially benefited. Why he had not done so he could not now think. More than once he had come to grief on the Cam when boating, or when trying to spring into a receding ferry-boat; but on those occasions he had never felt a fool, even if he had looked one. There are few things so potent as the presence of ladies for

making a young man feel a fool. And what one looks is, after all, of so little importance, compared with what one feels.

Mr. Fairbank good-naturedly helped to remove some of the mud from Cecil's garments with tufts of grass, remarking, as he did so, that he should rather like to go through some of his old Oxford experiences again, when he and two or three friends—now far away, one being a bishop in the colonies, another a professor in India, yet another, who had been the merriest among them, somewhere at the bottom of the Atlantic—used to get upset among the weeds in the upper river, and land among the geese, which, as all Oxford men know, congregate thereabouts, and clean themselves (not the feathered geese,—the other ones) with tufts of grass, just as he, the vicar, was cleaning Cecil now.

"That vicar of yours is not half a bad sort," Victoria observed, when he had left them.

"Is that the way you speak of the clergy in America?" asked Violet, reproachfully. (Victoria had been some years in America: her father was there now, looking after his silver-mines.)

"In America we say what we think," Victoria answered; "and we don't think a black coat and a collar which buttons behind place a man above criticism,—any more than does a purple velvet coat."

"I believe you came to stay with us for the set purpose of being down on me," said Cecil, morosely.

"Yes, I did," replied Victoria, untruthfully.

Victoria had only come the day before, as we have stated, but in that time the praises of Cecil had been so sounded in her ears by his mother and sister as to arouse her natural antagonism. Moreover, she remembered that she had thought her cousin conceited when he was a school-boy.

"Tell me one thing, Vic," Cecil said, as he stared at an old church on a hill near the sky. "Did you encourage me to try and get those blackberries in hope of the pleasure of seeing me make an ass of myself?"

"And did you really see any frog at all?" added Violet.

"What church is that on the hill?" demanded Victoria, as if she had not heard.

"St. Martha's. And tell me, Victoria, did you wish to see me fall into that ditch?" persisted Cecil.

"No," Victoria answered. "I wished to prove to myself that you were an ordinary man in spite of your Oscarwildeism."

"And does it signify to you—I mean, do you really care what sort of a man I am?" he asked, with a look the like of which had swept mathematics and classics out of the head of more than one girl at Girton and Newnham,—for the moment, be it understood.

"On the whole, I think not," said Victoria, with a side-glance at the young undergraduate to see the effect of her words.

Violet sighed. It had been the dream of her school-girl life to bring her friend Victoria and her brother to marry, story-book fashion, and here they were disagreeing at the very outset. She recollects that when they were children they had always disagreed; but then that was so long ago; and they had not met since till now.

Violet was a little given to sighing, especially since the advent of Mr. Fairbank to Fenley. She had also lately evinced a great predilection for "In Memoriam" and "Maud," though previously nothing in the literary line except Edna Lyall's works had received any special attention from her. She moreover sang the same song continually. It was called "Forever and forever." Violet had a fairly good voice, and it was tolerably well trained; the song was pretty, but somehow the best things pall when repeated too often. Cecil, who had not been abroad this vacation, had, he felt, had quite enough of the sighs, the green volumes, the voice, and the song. As to the last, it was good for Mr. Paolo Tosti that at least some prayers remain unanswered, otherwise those of Mr. Cecil Calverley might have injured him. Sometimes Cecil (we wonder at his lack of sympathy, seeing that he had the poetic temperament) would avoid going to the drawing-room after dinner altogether, from his dread of hearing his sister wail forth this song. His mother put down this rudeness on his part to the example of his father, who never—or almost never—joined the ladies after dinner. On these occasions Cecil usually carried his cigar to the heath and smoked, and thought of his favorite topic,—viz., a simple country maid with beseeching trustful eyes and no learning, whose greatest ambition should be to pillow her pretty head upon his broad breast. Cecil's breast was broad, and he was tall too, and strong as a young Hercules. The maidens he thought about usually wore red cloaks. But this fancy may have been due to the fact that red cloaks were much affected by the little maids in these parts.

After the put-down Victoria had vouchsafed, and the exasperating sighs of Violet, Cecil fell a-thinking with more favor than ever of these rustic red-clad girls, who never snubbed you, and who displayed their pretty dimples instead of sighing. Just then (speak of the angels!) one of these maidens appeared in sight, running madly along, her red cloak flying behind her.

"What is that girl running so fast for?" Victoria asked.

"Oh, don't you see?" cried Violet. "Farmer Jennings's young bull has escaped, and is after her. Oh, she is making for the big sand-pit! Cecil, Cecil, stop her! if she escapes the bull she will be killed by the fall in the sand-pit."

But Cecil heard none of this. He was speeding on towards the girl and her pursuer, like the wind.

"Stand still!" he shouted, as he made the ground fly under his feet. "Turn,—and run back!"

"What! turn and face that infuriated animal?" Victoria thought, with a shudder.

Presently the meaning of what he had said became apparent. The bull stood still as the girl turned and evidently hesitated. In a moment Cecil was face to face with the savage beast, whose attention was now entirely concentrated on his new prey. He who hesitates is lost. That young bull hesitated; and Cecil in the very nick of time actually and literally seized him by the horns, and pushed him backward over the sand-bank into the deep excavation below. The fierce animal bellowed, and pawed the sand, and dug it up with his horns, but he was helpless,

though uninjured ; for the sand broke away when he attempted to climb the steep sides of the pit.

The red-cloaked maiden was profuse in her thanks and courtesies ; but, unfortunately (or fortunately), she was, like Audrey, poor in personal attractions, being, in fact, very plain indeed. But for this, it is by no means certain that Cecil would not have considered this adventure the first link in a chain of love forged for him by fate.

As it was, he haughtily chid the girl for wearing a color which offended the artistic taste of bulls, and bade her go to Farmer Jennings and inform him of the situation of that lamb-like property of his.

When the girl had gone, Victoria was the first to speak. "Well, cousin," she observed, critically, "I guess you are a man, after all."

Violet, who was pale and trembling, smiled a gratified smile as she said, interrogatively, " Didn't I tell you ?"

" I'm sure I'm much obliged," Cecil remarked, raising his hat a little, " but I can't see that I have done anything deserving of commendation. Any fellow could have done what I did." Yet Cecil secretly felt that he had scored a point.

CHAPTER II.

CECIL RUNS AWAY FROM A SONG.

THE dining-room at Heatherdene (such was the name of the Calverley country residence) was quite distinctive. Mrs. Calverley, if not of an original mind, could at least copy accurately and without exciting suspicion as to her methods. This she contrived by a judicious admixture of models. So she passed muster as a woman of taste. She had all her own way in the arrangements of the house, for Violet's artistic interests confined themselves to church decoration ; and as for Mr. Calverley, art, except in bookbindings, scarcely seemed to exist for him. And Cecil—well, he was much too lazy to trouble himself one way or another about the household arrangements, provided his personal comforts did not suffer ; and it is certain his mother would see they did not.

This dining-room, then, was out of the ordinary. Instead of pictures in frames, the walls were painted with landscapes set in beautifully-carved oak panels. The ceiling was painted, too, with a scene from the adventures of Ulysses. Mrs. Calverley had not read the Odysey herself, but the artist said he had : so surely that was enough. Mr. Calverley said there was something wrong about the figure of Calypso, and that he was unable to recall any passage in the *Odyssey* where Calypso is represented as receiving rare fruits from the hand of her adorer, while lightly-clad nymphs float dimly in the surrounding azure. But Mrs. Calverley took refuge in the artist, who, if not yet a master, was going to be one ; and she knew (what didn't she know ?) that some day the world would flock to see this work of art.

It was over the soup that Violet began to narrate the bull adventure. Her father sat quietly at his end of the table, bent on the busi-

ness of dinner. His hair seemed grayer and his sight shorter than usual in the candle-light (Mrs. Calverley would have no light but that of candles in her rooms). He spoke but little; it seemed to cost him an effort. But when he did speak, a gentle and really beautiful smile lit his face,—a smile which only a heart filled with charity could produce, in combination with a mind so well stored with the history of men as to know their weakness, and to pity rather than condemn. What time he could spare from his books he devoted, one would think, to the framing of excuses for the weakness of his fellow-men, he was so ready with them. He shrank from the suffering of any living thing as if he felt the pain in his own person. He would rescue stray dogs and cats from tormenting boys and give them an asylum—a sort of private "Dogs' and Cats' Home"—in an out-building on what Mrs. Calverley called "the estate" and Mr. Calverley "the grounds."

When Violet told the story of Cecil and the bull, Mr. Calverley, after ascertaining that no person had been injured, expressed some anxiety as to the fate of the poor bull.

"Poor bull, indeed!" cried Mrs. Calverley. "I think Farmer Jennings ought to be ashamed to keep a savage bull like that, which is vicious even in this cool autumn weather."

"Don't you think Cecil was a regular hero?" Violet interrupted, addressing everybody in general.

Cecil's mother beamed upon him, and was about to say something rapturous, when Cecil broke in with,—

"You promised last night, Victoria, to tell us about your adventure at the custom-house: won't you tell us now?"

"Oh, it really wasn't much," Victoria answered. "They make such a fuss about declaring things at Newhaven, so when they asked me if I had anything I ought to declare in my hand-bag I said, 'Nothing except powder,' and the man stepped back right on to an old gentleman's toes. He had evidently dynamite in his mind. Then I explained that it was *face-powder*."

"You don't use that kind of thing, do you?" Cecil asked, anxiously.

Victoria glanced round the room to see if any servant were present, and then turned her mocking eyes on her cousin, saying to him, "Well, cousin, up to now my complexion doesn't seem to need renovating, but the instant it does I shall 'make up.' As one cannot tell when this may occur, I provide myself beforehand."

At these remarks Mrs. Calverley grew grave, Violet looked shocked, Mr. Calverley smiled, and Cecil looked disgusted.

"Fancy a girl openly declaring her intention of painting her face!" he meditated, and in the silence that followed he thought more than ever of the happiness of possessing the love of some unsophisticated village maiden, who had never heard either of church decoration or of face-powder. He really had a good mind to visit his aunt Isabella, after all. Mr. Lane's position must make intercourse with village maidens easy.

After the ladies had gone, Cecil remained a little time with his father, inquired how his life-work on "*The Sacred Words of All*

Languages" was getting on, and then betook himself to the yellow drawing-room.

Some one was singing. It was not Violet, so it must be Victoria. She was singing Schubert's "*Wayside Inn*."

"That is too sad a song for you," Cecil said to her when she had finished. "Sing something gay."

She passed her hands over the keys and considered. Cecil looked at the ivory whiteness of her back, which gleamed all the whiter in the black evening dress, at the shining coils of her blue-black hair, at the soft roundness of her arms, and decided that this cousin of his was really possessed of great attractions. He could not see her face from where he stood, but he knew it well now, though so few hours had as yet been afforded him for its study in its matured beauty. Victoria was twenty now: when last he had seen her, they were both ten, and Violet eight.

"A gay song do you want?" Victoria said, as she dreamily called forth one of Chopin's nocturnes from the keys. "Do you know, if I am very happy I generally prefer to sing sad songs? It is when I am miserable that I sing the gay songs best."

"And are you ever miserable?" Cecil asked, changing his position to look at her face.

"Oh, sometimes, like other mortals, I suppose," she replied, lightly. "But you shall have a gay song if you want it." And she at once broke into the opening chords of "*The Moss Trooper*." The room seemed at once changed to some lonely road of long ago, and visions of rollicking highwaymen in gay uniform passed before the eyes of the listeners.

When she had finished singing, Victoria rose smiling from the piano with a suspicious moisture in her mocking brown eyes. Cecil noted this, and thought within himself, as the refrain of the song still rang in his ears ("Heigh-ho, my heart is free!"), that his own heart would not be free long, if he had to be much in the company of this cousin. He had best go away before her toils of mysterious smiles and moods had bound him too closely. He would not be the slave of a woman; and Victoria's lover would be her slave, he felt sure. Who could fight against that incomprehensible charm of hers, if once vanquished?

"Mother," Cecil said, as he seated himself near her on a couch by the fire, "I really mean to go and stay a few days with Aunt Isabella. I think I shall write and ask her if she can do with me on Thursday. To-day is Tuesday; there would be time for her to reply."

Mrs. Calverley laid down her embroidery and began to stroke her velvet dress abstractedly as she gazed helplessly at her first-born.

"Do you really mean it, Cecil?" she asked, doubtfully.

"Yes, mother," he answered. "I shall go if Aunt Isabella will have me."

"And if she refuses?" Mrs. Calverley inquired, a painful smile lighting her still handsome face.

"Then I shall try to persuade her to relent."

"It was a great mistake your aunt made, Cecil," said his mother,

gently. "Neither Victoria's mother nor I could overlook it. She might have married Lord Everhall, had she chosen; and there were others."

"But don't you think, mother, that she did well to marry for love?" Cecil asked, playing abstractedly with the sapphire stud in his shirt-front.

"People should consider more things than love when they marry," said Mrs. Calverley, with dignity. "Look how well your father and I get on."

"But you know, mother, you scarcely ever see each other," laughed Cecil.

"Hush! Violet is going to sing," said his mother.

Cecil glanced at the piano at the other end of the room. His sister was seated there, and beside her stood Victoria, looking royal enough, in her sweeping silken skirts, even for the name she bore. The song began:

I think of all thou art to me;
I think of what thou canst not be:
My life is curst with thoughts of thee,
Forever and forever!

My heart is full of grief and woe,
I see thy face where'er I go;
I would, alas! it were not so,
Forever and forever!

Perchance if we had never met,
I had been spared this wild regret,
This endless striving to forget,
Forever and forever!

Perchance if thou wert far away,
Did I not see thee day by day,
I might again be blithe and gay,
Forever and forever!

Cecil waited for no more. "Mother," he said, "I think I will go out and smoke a cigar."

"My own boy," said his mother, taking his hand tenderly between both her own, "think again about writing to your aunt, and you may change your mind. In any case" (she added, impressively, and without the connection being apparent), "my son will never bring me a daughter of whom I cannot approve."

"Of course not, mother!" laughed Cecil. "What ever made you say that?"

But that very night Cecil wrote to his aunt, and in due time received an answer containing a promise of a cordial welcome, not on Thursday, however, but on Saturday; and Cecil made up his mind to go.

After the receipt of Mrs. Lane's letter, Cecil repaired to his father's library, for the nominal purpose of obtaining his permission to visit his aunt,—for the actual one of obtaining a necessary check.

Cecil needed checks for more than this journey. His tailor's bill at Cambridge remained unpaid. There was also a rather long account

owing to Mills & Maunders for books and pictures, and there were other things. Still, the immediate moment was all that Cecil cared to face. Therefore he came to the library to ask for a moderate check of twenty pounds.

Mr. Calverley, senior, was seated in his high-backed oak chair, with his wealth of books on every side, when his son entered. The morning sun was flooding the otherwise rather gloomy room with light, and dispersing the colored rays from the windows which bore the arms of the Calverleys in long lines of blue and red intermixed with yellow rays, which were too bright to look at.

"Well?" said the old gentleman, interrogatively.

"I have come, sir," Cecil began, advancing towards his father, and remaining respectfully a few yards distant,—"I have come to ask your permission to visit my aunt Isabella."

Mr. Calverley put down the copy of "Faust" which he had been perusing, and asked, with a show of interest, "What is your motive for wishing to visit your aunt?"

Cecil was silent for a moment; then he said, "Well, sir, it would be a real change: I should see a different side of life; and, then, I don't know why a nephew should not visit his aunt."

"I agree with you," his father made answer. "I think a nephew should visit his aunt. What does your mother say?"

"Well, sir, I think she is afraid that such an act on my part might be misconstrued into an admission of her having been in the wrong in keeping my aunt at a distance; but she offers no objection to my going."

"Then I certainly offer none," said Mr. Calverley. "Indeed, I have never myself seen any reason why we should hold aloof from your aunt."

Having said this, Mr. Calverley returned to his book, which was meant as a sign that the interview was ended.

But Cecil still waited.

His father looked up. "Is there something else you wish to ask me?" he inquired.

"I shall want a little money, sir," Cecil answered, with a show of hesitation.

"Oh, of course: I did not think of it," said Mr. Calverley, hastily. "How much do you want?"

Cecil named the sum.

Mr. Calverley unlocked a drawer in his writing-table, and took out his check-book.

"I hope you owe nothing, Cecil?" he observed, as he filled in a check. "You are spending a good deal."

"Yes, sir; I fear I have been a little extravagant," Cecil admitted uneasily, ignoring the question of debts.

His father handed him the check; and, having thanked him, the young man quitted the library, glad to escape the possibility of further questions.

Longworth Station was the nearest to Fenley,—and that was four miles distant: so it was necessary for Cecil to drive there on Saturday morning. He was fond enough of walking, but there were his port-

manteau, and his gladstone bag, and his dressing-bag, this last article being utterly indispensable.

Saturday morning proved a most lovely one for a drive: so Victoria and Violet elected to go with Cecil to the station. "I can drive, you know," said Victoria: "so there is no need to take the man with us."

During the drive Victoria was in the highest spirits. She laughed and chattered till Violet looked at her in surprise. Even Victoria had never appeared so wildly jubilant as this before. Cecil, too, was struck by her extravagant gayety, and wondered if she was glad he was going. The thought annoyed and piqued him. Then he remembered what she had said that evening at the piano, about singing sad songs when she was gay, and gay ones when she was sad. Could it be that she was so gay because she was sorry he was going? The reflection had comfort in it. A handsome young fellow does not like a girl to appear glad when he goes away. "Not that I care really for Victoria's smiles or frowns," Cecil meditated, uneasily (for, after all, it was not clear to his mind that he did not already care a good deal about his cousin's opinion).

"What shall you girls do this afternoon?" Cecil asked when they were nearing Longworth.

"Oh, you know we are to go with Aunt Agatha to Mr. Morrison's studio," said Victoria, brightly. "I long to see his pictures. Aunt Agatha says they are quite miracles. And then he is very good-looking, and plays on the violin."

"I don't like men who affect to do everything," observed Cecil, shortly. "Morrison is always taking up something new."

Victoria stole an amused glance at her cousin, and made answer, "And I—well, I adore people who are always taking up something new: it shows they have enterprise."

Then Violet, who had been very silent during the drive, said she was sure she could see the smoke from the London train. It must be in the station already.

Victoria whipped up the pony, and in a moment more they were at the little station, and Cecil's portmanteau had been seized by a porter, while Cecil rushed to get his ticket.

There was no time for any farewells except the very briefest, before the train moved on towards London. The two girls stood watching the train as it crept round the bend, and the last they saw of Cecil was his gray coat-sleeve, and a floating bit of delicate silk which the young man called his handkerchief.

"I did not think Cecil meant really to go," said Violet. "What can his mind be bent on, I wonder?"

"On what I told you," laughed Victoria: "he is gone to do something extraordinary."

But Victoria Lascelles did not laugh naturally; and there was a slight quiver about her lips as she walked out of the station. She also became suddenly mute as they drove away.

"I believe she is angry with Cecil," Violet told herself. "But what can have made him go to Aunt Isabella's just now, I wonder?"

shaken, and said, "I do not care about it, and—anybody did him just now."

CHAPTER III.

CECIL PUTS A SOVEREIGN IN THE PLATE.

BEFORE Cecil Calverley reached Handswick Station, he had come to half regret his rash experiment, as he now termed this visit to his aunt and uncle. Victoria Lascelles had been a very pleasant companion, he reflected, and it might be that she would take it into her head to go to Paris, to her father's sister, Madame Meunier, before his return, in which case he might not see her for ages. But, after all, had he not come away just to avoid her? Then came the thought, would it, after all, be such a dreadful fate to be Victoria's slave? Would not the fetters be silken?—would not—

"Handswick! Handswick!" cried a solitary porter, cutting short Cecil's meditation. He glanced through the window as the train bore him slowly into the little station. Surely that rather stout gentleman in semi-clerical attire, who was standing under a lamp-post peering anxiously through his glasses at the carriages as they slowly passed him, must be Mr. Lane. This conjecture was presently confirmed; for as Cecil descended from the carriage, a rug over his arm and his dressing-bag in his hand, this gentleman came panting up with a kindly smile and an extended hand. "Mr. Calverley?" he said, interrogatively.

"Yes, I am Cecil," said the young man, passing his bag to his other hand, that he might shake hands with his uncle. "And you are Mr. Lane, are you not?"

"The same," replied the minister, hurriedly, "and very glad to welcome you."

"It is very good of you and my aunt to take me at such short notice," said Cecil, as the two men made their way to the door which led out of the station.

"Not at all! not at all!" returned the minister, adding, "The cab is outside. If you will get in, I will look after the luggage. What have you?"

"Oh, I will see to that," said Cecil, turning round. "I had almost forgotten it."

Cecil Calverley's ideas of the neighborhood that night, as gathered during the ride from the station to the manse, were about as vague as his ideas of Dissent. He was conscious that the road was descending and passed by rows of cottages and a few isolated houses of a better class; then a church-yard was reached, lit by a large three-light gas-lamp, which also did the duty of illuminating the market-place, a jutting blacksmith's shop, conveniently placed to be driven into in the dark, a bowling-green, and a tripe-shop. These, together with the graveyard, did not make the most cheerful impression on the newcomer's mind, and before he reached the little manse he was inclined to regret coming.

This was perhaps a little unfair, for his reverend uncle had done his best to entertain him during his ride, and had told him several points of interest to one knowing anything of Methodist customs. The gentlemen "on trial" were discussed and their chances weighed;

the extraordinary "love-feast" vessels Handswick boasted of were described,—and this was the really amusing part of the conversation, in Cecil's opinion. He positively laughed when he heard his uncle state his solemn belief that the said vessels were defective soup-tureens procured from Tunstall pottery at a small cost.

Cecil had little sympathy with his uncle's complaint about long journeys across lonely moors and along ill-made roads in the course of his pastoral duties. But on Mr. Lane telling him that when he preached at any distance from home he usually took a meal with some member of his congregation, he expressed an heroic desire to accompany him on one of these occasions; and this so greatly pleased the reverend gentleman that he had dreams of writing to the Cambridge resident Wesleyan minister to get this High-Church nephew put down on some Methodist class-book. Time travels swiftly, but not so swiftly as desires to their fulfilment in a sanguine mind; and Mr. Lane had a great belief in the body to which he belonged, and racked his brains with undue anxiety for those outside of it.

The manse was not a bad little place, after all. It was a small gabled villa, standing alone, and surrounded by a garden. But, unfortunately, as Mr. Lane explained, the trustees had spent more than they had calculated on in building it, for which reason the interior did not fulfil the promise of the outside. One point dwelt upon by the poor minister was the horrible nuisance of the second-hand drawing-room furniture, which had turned out to be so charged with moths that he was reduced to putting wool in his ears to avoid hearing the clapping of hands which went on every evening in the room below his study; for thither his wife and her one servant resorted when the lights were lit, in order to rid themselves of at least a portion of the plague of moths.

The gate creaked so loudly that it did away with the necessity of ringing the bell, and the door was opened as soon as they got to it. A servant with somewhat short skirts, exhibiting very large feet clad in what are called in the Black Country "clogs," presented herself. She apologized for, and consequently drew attention to, these articles, explaining that she had been "doing down the yard."

A striking contrast to this handmaid was a slight and delicate lady in a neat gray costume, who appeared in the hall almost at once, holding a baby.

"You don't remember me, Cecil," she said, in a voice that was very musical and perhaps just a little reproachful.

"I was not a precocious child," Cecil replied, with a bright smile, "but, though I was so very small when I saw you last" (Mrs. Lane had once visited her sister at a London hotel for an hour), "I see I ought to have remembered you. Is it possible," he went on, in his pleasant way, "that you can have boys old enough to be at Kingswood? It speaks well for the Wesleyan system, I must say, that you can look so young."

His aunt cast an all-comprehending glance at him, and smiled a little half-smile, not unmixed with raillery and with a suggestion of cynicism which made her for the moment in some vague way resemble

her nephew. Then, with the air of a philosopher who makes the best of everything and does not stop to consider in detail an annoyance or a difficulty, but pursues a straightly-defined course with an outward calm which reflects none of the inner turmoil, she led her nephew into the little room they termed a parlor.

It was very bright and cheerful, and the hardness of a horse-hair chair was forgotten when the eyes rested on the pretty water-colors, the snowy window-curtains, and the dainty needle-work. The fire was bright,—for coal is exceedingly cheap in Staffordshire,—and the china upon the white cloth twinkled and shone till it looked really inviting. In fact, everything was so cosey that Cecil had a half-defined idea that he would quit his mother-Church and become a Wesleyan minister himself. After all, it was so much pleasanter to be waited on by one's own wife, who has white hands, and whom one may kiss with impunity. Yes, perhaps the love-in-a-cottage idea might be carried out as a Wesleyan minister. There would be no "society fellows" hanging round, for instance.

There was something in Cecil Calverley's nature that abstracted the sordid and showed him only the poetical or the comic side of life. He was a great dreamer, and at such times as he dreamed not he laughed. This did not prevent his college from having serious hopes of him; although it was well known that while other men were "grinding" with their oak "spotted," he was usually to be found in some lady's drawing-room singing his last new song, or with a becoming and graceful hesitation handing to some fair one a leaf from his pocket-book with his latest poem upon it. He never burnt midnight oil unless at a dance, and was always at college chapel at eight in the morning looking fresh and trim, while some of his competitors, who had struggled into a surplice somehow, were blinking like owls through their glasses as they mechanically went through the service. The actual life of rustics, which he had written of times without number, was almost wholly unknown to this drawing-room pet; and in coming to Handswick Cecil felt he had an opportunity of seeing it unalloyed by proximity to his own home. He was in very good spirits, therefore, when Sunday morning came, and he sallied forth with his uncle and aunt to the chapel, which was not far distant.

Once within the building, he found himself an object of great interest. The chapel was full, and all eyes were upon him. This did not disconcert him in the least. Seated beside his aunt opposite the pulpit, he saw his uncle mount the stairs and take his place. Cecil then saw him hand to some one in the singing-pew behind him a slip of paper, which his aunt informed him contained the numbers of the hymns to be sung. The organ now burst forth with a terrible peal. It was the Gloria from Mozart's Twelfth Mass, thrown at the heads of the congregation in a manner quite indescribable. The whole assembly looked at Cecil with an air of defiance, as much as to say, "What do you think of it?" One face in a side-pew attracted his attention partly by its size, which was great, and partly by its expression, which was vinegary. As he looked at her,—for it was a woman, some fifty years of age,—he saw something conveyed to her nose which had a strong

resemblance to a pomatum-pot. This he took to be a rural smelling-bottle.

Cecil's attention, however, was drawn off from this interesting person by the cessation of the Gloria and his uncle rising and giving out a hymn.

The congregation and choir at once burst forth again, with more vigor than skill. In fact, Cecil afterwards learned that the outpouring of sound was increased as far as possible for the benefit of the stranger.

He glanced from his hymn-book to the singing-gallery over his uncle's head. The first thing he saw was the red-headed organist, well displayed between the red curtains. At the extreme left was a man of enormous proportions, under whom the singing-gallery shook. He sang something, Cecil couldn't make out what. It was not bass; it was not treble: it was something unique. Next to him was a thin, lanky youth, with eyes too large and chin too small, who wailed out his notes like a funeral dirge. There were several more men and youths, and then came a set of giggling girls, gaudily dressed, and with their hair done, so far as possible, in the town fashion. They were nudging each other, and whispering, as the verses were given out, and glancing at Cecil with a boldness that offended his poetical ideas of womanhood very considerably. These were no violets beside mossy stones.

Cecil kept his eyes upon his hymn-book now, with some disgust; and it was during the prayer that he looked next at the singing-gallery, he could hardly have told why,—perhaps to see the attitude of these girls during prayer. As he looked he saw a pair of sweet blue eyes gazing at him from under a little velvet hat over which a very soiled blue feather drooped. Such a contrast were these gentle eyes, with their child-like, modest glance, to the bold looks of her neighbors, perhaps friends, that Cecil felt his heart beat faster, and his eyes dwelt upon her again from time to time.

What was it that charmed him, that fascinated him? The girl was as gaudy as the others. He did not think her features very good, now he examined them more critically. Her hair was certainly pretty. It hung upon her shoulders, golden and wavy, and nestled against a cheek so softly moulded and so sweetly colored that the rosy dawn might have settled there. But some of the other girls had good complexions too; they lived in the country, and might be expected to have them. Then it must be her eyes. Yes, they were very blue indeed; or else they looked the more so beside her faded blue feather. And now she raised her head more from the front of the pew, and he noticed around her neck a string of white pearls. They were common enough, evidently, but they were very pretty; and this hot-blooded young man, whose imagination ran wild, began to long to dress that girl in a becoming costume, to see what she would look like then.

Cecil was so much engaged in this imaginative occupation that he did not observe when the prayer ended, and he was still leaning, with his chin upon his hand, looking upward, when he received a most unpleasant knock upon the nose from an old lady in front, who had promptly backed into her position, regardless of his. And, to make matters worse, the old dame, who was evidently a pillar of the church

and esteemed herself to be somewhat, asked him, in a very audible whisper and with a great deal of asperity, "Why don't you mind what you're a-doing of?"

The young man glanced up at the singing-gallery. He was very red, and much inclined to walk out. All the girls were laughing; and she of the blue eyes was laughing too, like the rest. Ah, no doubt her baby looks, her confiding tender eyes, were all a chance of nature, to delude the unwary. She laughed with the rest, and like the rest. How he hated them! He derived very little benefit from his uncle's sermon, which, however, elicited many marks of approval from the congregation. One old man in particular, with an ear-trumpet directed towards the speaker, encouraged him with such remarks as "Thot's reet!" "Glory be to God for thot!" with other exclamations quite unintelligible to the young collegian.

The service over, Cecil observed that the singers left their gallery by a staircase which must lead past the preacher's vestry; and thither, by his aunt's permission, he betook himself to join his uncle. He might not have done this had he known that he would have to undergo an introduction to some leading members of the congregation, who were informed by his proud uncle of all his past successes and his yet unproved future. The leader of the choir, a tall, cadaverous iron-worker, with a great deal of collar which had never known starch, condescended to pat him on the head metaphorically, hoping he forgot not the Creator of his talents, and invited him to come with his uncle and have a bit of supper that evening after the service in the little chapel of Brooktown.

The "bit of supper" was alarming to Cecil, who was, in truth, fastidious, and nothing of a Bohemian. But he must pay a price, he reflected, if he would see a domestic interior in a Black-Country village: so he expressed himself charmed,—a word at which the iron-worker looked critical, and, with a slight show of contempt on his hard features for this handsome gentleman with the white hands and twisted moustache, said "good-morning" to him just a little coldly,—which he regretted a moment afterwards when he learned from a steward that the minister's nephew had put a sovereign into the collecting-plate.

Cecil had in fact done this; for, not having that which would pay his debts, he was prodigal of what was in his pockets.

CHAPTER IV.

CECIL IS CHARMED.

IF Cecil Calverley had a musical infliction in the morning, what he underwent at the evening service baffles description; for his fame had gone before him to the little Brooktown chapel, which being much in want of funds, the authorities decided to give him the Hallelujah Chorus at the close of the service. Now, the choir in this chapel considered itself quite superior to that

of the big chapel at Handswick ; and this for one all-important reason. Mr. Blackhouse, their leader, was a musical composer, a piece of his having once been performed, so he asserted, at Lichfield Cathedral, though he was unable to fix the date or to produce an ear-witness. This worthy contributed to the musical services in Brooktown Chapel in various ways. He composed tunes for them ; he sang bass, and at the same time played upon a violin ; and, more than this, he contributed eleven sons to the choir, all with voices or instruments, and all bearing composers' names. Mr. Lane, who told Cecil all this on their way to the service, failed to remember all the names. Mendelssohn Blackhouse played upon the bassoon, while his twin-brother Haydn performed upon the flute. Beethoven, whose voice was in a critical condition, due to his age, sang bass or treble as it happened, while Weber was the main-stay of the altos. Mozart Blackhouse did duty at the harmonium, and further than this Mr. Lane could give no precise details.

In this edifice the choir sat just beneath the pulpit, the harmonium facing the preacher, and the choir the harmonium. The terrible shout that burst forth, almost before the last word of the first verse of the hymn had left the preacher's lips, caused Cecil to start violently. Mr. Blackhouse's usual injunction to his choir, to "give it volume," had not been omitted on this occasion ; and it was the more necessary because during the afternoon a mischievous Sunday-school boy had interfered with the harmonium, causing one of the keys to sound the whole time, continuing even after the singing had finished, so long as any wind remained in the instrument. The shouting and shrieking of the choir were emulated by the congregation, who were not to be outdone in such matters,—the consequence being a complete pandemonium, which left Cecil's ears ringing at the end of each verse. Very glad was he when the last hymn had been sung,—which was what is termed a "trumpet metre," the tune having been composed by Mozart Blackhouse with the assistance of his father. But, after a short benediction, he was alarmed to see a whole row of smiling Blackhouses preparing sundry music-books, while the weary minister leaned upon his elbows in the pulpit, and the congregation kept their seats. What could be the meaning of this ? Perhaps they were going to sing during a collection. But no : he had heard that the collection was to be made at the doors.

The choir rose, and, with stern countenances, got their instruments and books into position. Mozart pedalled a little, and the one note sticking down began to sound ominously. Some one took this to be the key-note, and gave a false start, and received a withering glance from the conductor. With the opening chord Cecil knew how much of it he was going to hear. With horrible distinctness each one vociferated his own peculiar pronunciation of the word "Hallelujah": All-li-loo-jeh, All-li-loo-yer, Al-ly-loo-you, Al-ly-loo-jah, and then, afterwards, Ah-men, Aye-men, Ah-min, Eh-men, with other vowel gradations too subtle to be written. And then the instruments, which were not precisely tuned to the same key, and the stamping of the conductor's foot, which was his only means of keeping time, engaged as he was with his violin, all helped to make the hubbub as complete as possible.

Meanwhile, the patient minister, at whose head this volley was directly fired, sat in an attentive attitude.

The performance over, everybody looked at Cecil. What did the Londoner think of that? He was not a Londoner; but, as he was not of the Black Country, to them he was a Londoner, unless he had come from America.

Once outside the flare and heat of the chapel, from which, it is needless to say, Cecil escaped as soon as he found it possible to do so, the Black Country looked black indeed. Cecil kept close to his uncle and the gentleman of the shirt-collar before mentioned, who had not forgotten the "bit of supper," and had promptly presented himself after the service to conduct his visitors to his "residence," as he termed it. He did not trouble them to talk much on the way. He had to criticise the sermon from a theological point of view, and to discuss the relative merits of the choirs of the two chapels, he himself being but an occasional visitor to the smaller. Finally, as they reached an extremely dark road, he indicated with his finger a glare of light against the horizon, and said, with affable freedom, "We keep some of the fires going, you see, of a Sunday. It's boiler Monday to-morrow, and I'm off."

Cecil ventured to ask what boiler Monday might be.

"Boiler Monday," replied the gentleman in the collar, with a little scorn in his voice, and a great deal in his face, which, however, was not visible,—"boiler Monday is the day when the boilers is cleaned, and, as I ain't wanted to oversee that, I takes a noliday; for, though the Lunnon gentleman mayn't think it——"

Cecil immediately assured him of his perfect belief in anything he should tell him.

"Though the gentleman *should not* believe me," repeated the iron-worker, with increased emphasis, "I has money in my pocket for a noliday, for I'm not a grinder, nor yet a puddler; I'm a overseer, I am; and me and my wife and my family is as respectable, and respected, mind me, as a good many as thinks themselves better. I does my work reg'lar, and I gets my pay reg'lar, week in and week out; and if the Lunnoner would like t' look over the works, and 'll just come up to-morrow morning—no, not to-morrow, that's boiler Monday, but Tuesday, at ten o'clock, and ask for Mister Trent, I'll show 'im over."

Cecil expressed his delight at the prospect of being shown over the works, especially by Mr. Trent.

"My son Abraham makes screws," went on the communicative egotist. "I do some of the finishing-work myself. My son Joseph, him as sings in the singing-pew, he's in the turning department; for at our works, you must know, sir, we does the handles as well as the tools, and send out finished jobs; and we pay as good a price per ton for our steel as the best man in Sheffield, though I dare say he'd say different, which is of no consequence. Be careful, mester,—I don't mean you, Mr. Lane; you know the rowd,—but the paths hereabouts are high up, and leave off sudden-like, when you're a-steppin' out, and if you're not good at sliding on your heels, and balancing upright at

the end, you just sit down at the bottom in black water, more like than not."

Cecil thought of his new trousers, which were not paid for, and the polite Cambridge tailor who would "be glad if Mr. Calverley could find it convenient to settle his account," and was much relieved when Mr. Trent indicated by a few sharp raps upon a door with his Bible, which, being bound with brass, was convenient for the purpose, that they had at last reached his habitation. This knocking at the door was a mere form, as it could have been opened from the outside.

The door was opened, and, oh, the flood of light that shot across the path!—light not from the candle which was held, but from a girl's eyes. The unstarched collar, the cadaverous countenance, the vulgar freedom and ostentation of the father were all forgotten. The tedious walk along the uneven road, the chapel experience,—everything seemed but a fair price to pay for a chance of sitting beside the owner of those blue eyes during supper. Victoria Lascelles seemed a thing of the past.

The girl went before them along the passage and opened the door of a sitting-room, and asked the gentlemen to "please sit them down" and she would tell her mother.

The minister was seated in a chair miscalled easy, covered with American cloth, while Cecil sat upon what Mr. Trent denominated a "sofy,"—further vouchsafing the information that "its pillars was stuffed with feathers from his own grandmother's farm-yard up country." There was a piano in the room, without the modern number of octaves, which deficiency was supposed to be compensated for by its having more than the usual complement of legs, showing to advantage on glass erections, green in color, raising the instrument a few inches from the brick floor, and termed by Mr. Trent sounding-pegs. There was a round table, with a family Bible upon it, covered with a crochetwork mat; and against the window stood another table, decorated with a chintz flounce after the manner of a toilet-table, and bearing the plants of the establishment. The walls were adorned with framed funeral cards surrounding a picture of Christ with a half-moon of gold paper carefully gummed over the glory round the head, which was "Papistical," Mr. Trent explained; but, as the picture had been bought cheap at a sale, he had thought of this novel means of reconciling it to his conscience. There were also many small portraits of a set and fixed description over the mantel-shelf, while upon the shelf itself was a little brass model of a steam-engine, which was Abraham Trent's production and had been in a show somewhere. The brown china dogs beside it formed an odd contrast to it, as did the wool flowers under two tiny shades. But the fire was bright, which gave an air of comfort to the room, and Cecil thought within himself that, after all, Black-Country fires were a charm which many a well-ordered house would do well to reproduce.

But where had the blue eyes gone all this time? They were really looking with a little concern at the appearance of the supper-table in the front kitchen, and at her mother, who would take off her Sunday gown after service, even if visitors were coming, and don her house winsey and the little plaid shawl she always wore upon her shoulders.

"Why conner thee rub up th' knives, instead o' starin' there?" said the mother, a little sharply, adding, in a tone audible in the parlor, as she turned and observed that her daughter still wore her best frock, "Go an' tak that dress off: I'm not a-goin' to have thee mitherin' about in that, mesters or no mesters."

The girl's red lips quivered, and the blue eyes grew bright with tears ready to fall on the dress which was so new and so pretty and which could not have been seen in the dark passage.

"Put thy brown dress on, Ruthanna" (this name was a compound of Ruth and Anna), went on the mother; "and be spry, for Samson's a-wakin' up, and thee mun tak him." The Samson referred to began to cry lustily, and Ruthanna went readily enough, tossing her light hair back, as she went, just a little defiantly; and soon Cecil heard her overhead, cooing to the baby, telling him "he must be a good lad, for there were some mesters down-stairs, and she'd tak him as soon as she had pulled her frock off."

There was no light in the room, and Ruthanna did not want one. Why should she see herself in the old brown dress, and think the more of how the strange gentleman would look at it when she went down? She buttoned it up, and it fitted awkwardly and tightly across her developing figure, with its soft curves and trim outline. Then she took the baby, which stopped crying, gave him a kiss too sounding to be poetical, and went down, still wearing about her neck the string of white pearls, which she had not thought to take off.

In her absence her mother had announced supper in her own way, with an appropriate smirk: "Will you be pleased to take something to eat now?" followed by an appeal to Mr. Trent to "show the road to the gentlemen." Thus it chanced that just as Ruthanna reached the kitchen door with the baby, Cecil had arrived at the same spot; and at that moment the youthful Samson exhibited his powers by seizing and crushing the frail necklace in his fat hand.

"Oh, Samson, how could thee! naughty baby!" exclaimed the girl, flushing and looking down at the white fragments which lay like hoarfrost upon the breast of her brown dress, while her eyes twinkled with tears.

The young gentleman thus rebuked cried vigorously, whereupon Cecil gave him his gold pencil-case to pacify him; which he afterwards regretted, as he discovered that the youthful tyrant, as well as the rest of the household, imagined it to be a gift, so that he felt compelled to leave it. He was sorry to see the girl look so troubled, and made some remark he meant to be comforting; but she did not hear it. She had deposited Samson on Abraham's knee, that she might remove the remnants of her prized necklace. Meanwhile, Mrs. Trent came up by a species of trap-door with a jug of beer in her hand, to catch (and reprove) Joseph, who was abstracting potatoes from a saucepan upon the hob and pushing them into Samson's extended hand.

The sirloin of beef could not be found fault with, save that it was somewhat spoiled in appearance by the rough carving it had undergone at dinner. The dish of bacon and cheese fried together was odiferous enough to excite a pleasant sense of appetite in a Black-Country family.

But the beef had to be eaten with an iron fork, which would turn round in a bone handle ; and the knife was expected to do duty as a salt-spoon, in common with its fellows, in a central salt-glass. Cecil made no such use of it, but he had to see the others doing so, as well as to suffer the agony of beholding these sharp instruments carried to the mouths of the family, including even Samson, who testified his enjoyment by putting his foot into his brother's plate, and his potato into his beer, and from thence on to his shirt-front.

Ruthanna was now waiting on the company, moving hither and thither in this uncouth family like a changeling. The bright green of the walls, the crude blue of the window-blind, the uneven brick floor, and the table spread there, seemed all out of harmony with her gentle loveliness, which Cecil believed, in spite of the laughing in chapel in the morning, was but the reflection of a beautiful soul which he longed to know.

This girl was so different, he felt, from anything he had ever seen. She led a natural, simple life, while all he knew were more or less artificial. There was something pathetic in the plain, ill-fitting gown she wore, and in her girlish love of finery, evidenced by her grief over her broken beads. Why not make a bright page in her history for her to remember?—make her happy with a few of those baubles she seemed to prize? It could be no harm to gladden her heart. Moreover, he could gratify his own love of petting one of the opposite sex without fear of some mother or chaperon inquiring into his intentions.

Ruthanna avoided looking at him, and kept as much out of his sight as might be, consistently with her duties; for there had come into her mind at sight of him the consciousness of her own homely garments and language. As if a mirror had somehow been held up to her and hers, she noticed with burning cheeks that the manners of her people were vulgar, that their language was rough. In fact, by some mesmeric influence, she saw it all, though she could never have defined it in words, as it must appear to him. And this it was that robbed Cecil of the sight of those blue eyes that had so enchanted him, and of her smiles radiant as sunshine. When Abraham deliberately pulled off his boots, and walked about the floor in stockings of primitive shape, talking about "easing his feet," the poor child hid her face in the baby's neck, to conceal the gathering tears of mortification; and her discomfiture was increased when her father told the minister that he was no poor man, and had several "housen,"—though she had often before heard him impart this information with pride and pleasure herself,—and that he was going to buy an "origin" for Abraham.

Poor little Ruthanna looked at Abraham's hands and at Cecil's, and then went out into the yard and leaned over the little latch-gate of the garden and cried bitterly. Nobody seemed to miss her, or to think it unsuitable for a young baby to be carried out of doors in the cold wind that had sprung up; and it was not until the visitors were taking their leave, Mr. Lane having passed out first, that Cecil noticed the little figure with the baby, her garments fluttering in the wind.

He was about to say something kind to her, when she gently touched his sleeve, and said, in a whispering, choking voice, "Please,

Mr. Calverley, you wonner tak no notice o' what father and mother say, and Abraham : they don't mean nothing."

"My dear child," said Cecil, with some warmth, "your parents have been most kind, most hospitable. What can you mean?"

"Oh, I know," she replied, shaking her pretty head sadly,—"I know what thee must think. Our ways ain't the gentry's ways; and," she added, beginning to cry afresh, "I wish thee had never come!"

"Come, Cecil," Mr. Lane called from the dark road, "can't you find your way?"

"Don't trouble, little girl," said Calverley, taking her hand gently within his. "I'll see you again, and talk this absurd matter over." Then, with a quick "good-night," he passed through the gate and joined his uncle.

CHAPTER V.

CECIL WALKS A LITTLE WAY WITH RUTHANNA.

"WELL, Cecil," said his aunt at breakfast next morning, "you have seen your domestic interior: what do you think of it?"

Cecil found it a little difficult to answer at first, the domestic interior was so obliterated by the memory of those sweet frightened eyes, and the choking voice that had said, "I wish thee had never come." Moreover, his aunt Isabella had a way of looking at him that reminded him of Victoria,—there was so much amused scrutiny in it. Already Cecil realized that, although the simple minister regarded him only with pride and pleasure and considered his visit as a personal compliment, his wife had different views and looked upon her nephew's advent with good-humored suspicion. She was obviously, Cecil felt, trying to discover his motive in coming.

"Oh, I found it all most novel and interesting, aunt," Cecil said. "I suppose," he added, incautiously, "you, as a lady, must be more shocked than amused by these uncouth folks."

"I am neither shocked nor much amused," replied Mrs. Lane, shortly. "In travelling from circuit to circuit one meets with all sorts of people; but, on the whole, the poor bear comparison very well with the classes who look down on them."

Cecil felt his color rise, and looked towards his uncle in hopes that he would make a diversion. The baby made one instead. That small lady from her high chair at the table managed to upset the cream-jug.

The minister's wife smiled faintly as she remedied the mishap by means of clean serviettes, remarking, as she rang for the jug to be replenished, "I am sorry, Cecil, that you should have the annoyance of a baby at table; but we have no nursery, not having a nurse-maid."

Cecil brightened visibly. "Let me drop a line to Violet, aunt," he said, eagerly: "she has always some *protégée* or other in connection with the church, for whom she wants to find a situation. She would very likely be able to send you just the nurse-maid you want."

"But I don't want one," Mrs. Lane said, as she handed the cream-jug to her maid-of-all-work.

Cecil was snubbed. He felt that he and his aunt did not quite understand each other, and were scarcely likely to do so.

In the forenoon, Mr. Lane had to go to Stafford to some Connexional meeting; and, as his aunt was domestically occupied, Cecil was reduced to amusing himself. He walked out, and discovered a beautiful common, which undulated in little hills covered with bracken, furze, and heather, which reminded him of Fenley and the rowan-trees cresting the hillock. It was really a beautiful scene,—so near the furnaces, too.

Yet for some reason he felt drawn to those black furnaces, and he took his way through long lanes with high banks, poplar-edged, past thatched cottages and little farmsteads, with a thoughtless gladness which made his feet bear him unconsciously and swiftly towards the clang ing forges of Brooktown vomiting their flames and smoke. He was young, and had pulses that could be stirred, an imagination to be fired. The noise and din, the smoke and flame, were no disagreeable infliction to him now. For had not two blue eyes opened there each day of a short glad life? Yes, he liked the forges to which she came to carry her father's and brothers' mid-day meal. He had entered at a gate and passed along a diminutive railroad. Around and about him were piles of fagots, stacks of iron, heaps of coal and coke, broken machinery and rusty boilers, and before him, under an immense shed, was a study in black and gold. The bright glow of the fires, the long lengths of red-hot iron drawn in and out, the black figures moving hither and thither, formed a picture terrible and fascinating. But, as he looked, he saw threading her way through the works a little figure with golden streaming hair and carrying a basket on her arm. She tripped along gayly, accosting one and another as she passed; and his heart thumped and he grew almost angry that they should dare to speak to her. So does admiration take possession of its object.

He moved behind a wagon, that he might look upon her longer while she was unconscious of his presence; and then, as she would have passed, he confronted her, with her clogs, her plain dress which she had outgrown, and her shabby little hat,—he with his fine manners and faultless attire. The poor little maid trembled so violently at sight of him that some china inside her basket rattled. He stood before her, enjoying her sweet confusion, which he thought he could end.

"I came to look for you," he said, "for I remembered your father saying you brought his dinner and your brothers'. Chance made me come at the right time."

"Father is away to-day," she said, looking up at him and then dropping her eyes; "but I have to come all the same, to bring Joe's and Abraham's."

"I will walk a little way with you," said Cecil; "and, Ruthanna," he went on, with a rich smile all his own, "do you not know a long way home? I want to talk to you about what troubled you last night."

The child had never learned to dissemble. She quite understood by this that Cecil wished to be with her; and she did not disguise the

pleasure the knowledge brought her. It was clear this gentleman did not despise her; and she had heard somewhere that gentlemen had cared about simple maids and married them, and they had lived happily,—so happily.

It was not Cecil's words alone that put such a thought into Ruthanna's head. It was his look, his attitude. Indeed, such were Cecil's thoughts as he talked with her that his soul spoke with his words. He was in love with her, in love at first sight, and his looks told the tale. But love with Cecil at this time was a moment's violent passion, which might go out at any time.

On the way from the Brooktown forges to the abode of the Trents on the Birmingham road there lay a shady lane, with high banks which in spring were starred with primroses, while the wild rose held its delicate head as high as if the smoke of forges had been miles away and it resided in as suitable an *entourage* as its more fortunate sisters at Fenley.

When Cecil and Ruthanna reached this spot, the beauty and solitude served to stimulate the young man's already inflamed imagination, and he took gentle possession of one of the girl's little hands, which yielded too readily. Cecil himself felt a weakness at the moment, which resulted in that sonnet of his that appeared afterwards in one of the magazines, about being "wrapped in one moment's sweet abandonment of rights or wrongs, spurning the after-fire of consequence."

The little hand which Cecil pressed was not to him red and roughened then; it was something that vibrated and trembled at his touch and set his heart beating fast.

"Ruthanna," he said, glancing at her sweet, confused face, "do you know, I had no time to criticise your family as you seem to think I did? I was so pained because *you* seemed distressed. It is always pain to a man to see a cloud on so sweet a little face."

Ruthanna glanced up with an odd mingling of shyness and confidence in her blue eyes. But she said nothing, and soon looked down again.

"You don't think, Ruthanna, that I could be such a brute as to partake of the hospitality of your parents and—and—well, criticise them?"

As a matter of fact, Cecil had been mentally holding the whole family up to ridicule, with the exception of Ruthanna. But when a man like Cecil wants to please a girl, a little untruth doesn't count much.

"Well, I mun believe thee," Ruthanna said, after a pause; and for reward she received a tender pressure from his hand, and the poor child was in heaven.

More might have happened, had not the shady lane ended abruptly, to merge into the open and unaccommodating Birmingham road. Cecil stopped short and glanced at his watch. He must hurry back, or he would be keeping his aunt waiting for dinner.

"Ruthanna," he said, as he left her, "we have not nearly had our talk out. Could you not meet me on the common to-night to finish it, at seven o'clock? I must go now."

"I have to go out to-night to take some things to the mangle," she answered, doubtfully. "I could come up to the common instead of going straight home."

"Well, I shall be there," said Cecil, "near the five mountain-ashes that grow all together: you know them?"

"Oh, yes; that is where John Ford and I sit of a Sunday afternoon sometimes in summer. But I mun go; mother's wasking to-day, and her will wonder why I've been gone so long."

With this she fled away, leaving Cecil a prey to new feelings. He had found his simple village maid more exquisitely attractive than even he could have imagined, with her sweet looks, and her frank pleasure at his notice. But who was this John Ford?

CHAPTER VI.

CECIL DRIES RUTHANNA'S TEARS.

"I TELL thee, thee shalt tak it off!" cried Mrs. Trent, angrily, as she savagely sprinkled some clean linen she was folding on the kitchen table. "Go to the mangle, indeed, in thee best hat!—a likely thing!"

Ruthanna stood still, near the table, her ripe lips quivering, her dark lashes drooping over her brimming eyes.

"Go thee and tak it off, like a good wench," put in Mrs. Billington, the charwoman, who came to help with the washing on Monday.

Ruthanna looked up with an indignant flash in her eyes, which were still bright with tears of mortification.

"Please, Mrs. Billington, dunner thee begin," she said.

Mrs. Billington, who was of a portly build and had a face like a full moon, took a sip at her favorite beverage,—viz., a large basinful of lukewarm water,—and then remarked, "Well, Ruthanna, if thee dunner mind thee mother, thee will think of it when her's gone."

"Her thinks of nothink except of gadding about, and getting of herself up to be stared at," said Mrs. Trent, as she gave one end of a sheet to Mrs. Billington to help her fold it. "Last night her wanted to keep on her best frock just because the minister's neview come to have a bit of supper. If me and my mester has scraped a bit of money together, Ruthanna needn't think as her is going to do herself up like a Brummagem shop-girl."

Ruthanna slowly took off her hat and went up-stairs, her heart full of bitter thoughts. She was well used to Mrs. Trent's outbursts of temper, but somehow this command to put on her old hat hurt her as nothing else had ever done. If Mr. Calverley should despise her, she felt, she could never bear to live. A sun had risen in her life since yesterday, and its light blinded her unaccustomed eyes.

"Come, Ruthanna, dunner stop all day!" called Mrs. Trent from the bottom of the stairs. "Thee mun tak Samson with thee now, for he's woke up. Put him in the pram, and I'll put the close for the mangle in front."

Ruthanna's heart beat fast as she passed out at the garden gate, pushing the ungainly perambulator before her. Would the handsome

stranger really meet her on the heath, or would he forget? Could it be only yesterday that he had first looked at her with those eyes that made her own droop with a fear which was joy? Could it be only to-day that his soft, sensitive hand had held her own little red and roughened one so many minutes in his?

Ruthanna pushed the perambulator so fast that her cheeks were all aglow and her hat fell slightly forward over the white forehead, where the wilful little love-locks rose and fell as she walked. So deep in thought was she that all at once she ran up against some one.

"Well, Ruthanna, my little wench, thee art in a hurry to-night," exclaimed a rough but honest voice, and the girl looked up, to meet a kindly smile on the face of John Ford. Ruthanna looked at him, her cheeks growing more rosy. John thought he had never seen her look so beautiful. The sunset glow which still lingered in the sky lit her golden hair till it looked like a glory. Her blue eyes shone with an unusual light. There was something else, too, in her look, which John could not define. It was new, whatever it was, and, while it charmed him, it filled him with a vague uneasiness; for this young man meant some day to ask Ruthanna to be his wife.

"I was going to see if Abraham was going to the meeting to-night," said John. "Mr. Lane is going to give us a lecture on 'Solar Physics,' because Mendelssohn Blackhouse made a mistake which side he was to take in the discussion with Jim Dykes on the French Revolution, and both on 'em 've got up the same side."

"I'm sure I don't want to know about them things," said Ruthanna, impatiently.

John Ford looked at her in amazement. He was a manly-looking young fellow, a little slow perhaps in some things, but most of all where his own merits were concerned.

"Thee told me, Ruthanna," he began, after a confused pause, "as thee wanted me to improve myself, and thee liked to hear about the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society and what we were learnin'."

"So I do," said Ruthanna; "only I'm in a hurry."

"Well," said John, brightening, "I will wheel the perambulator for thee as far as Jesson's foundry,—there'll be time enough to see Abraham after; and I don't know as I should have come so early, only I didn't see thee Sunday night."

He took his place at the perambulator as he spoke, and began to walk on.

Ruthanna walked at his side, flushed and uneasy. She was in no way bound to this man, yet somehow she felt like a traitor in going to meet Cecil Calverley. John had always been fond of her, and she knew his intentions well enough. Until yesterday she had felt proud to be the favored one of John Ford, but now—what magic had so changed her? what had so changed her thoughts of all her people, her thoughts of John Ford? Only the glance of eyes too tender, the touch of a hand too soft and white, the tones of a voice too practised.

"Mr. Lane's nephew—the Cambridge gentleman—was at thy house last night, wasner he?" said John, after a pause.

"Yes," answered Ruthanna, awkwardly. Somehow it was pain to her to hear John speak of Mr. Calverley.

"Well, my wench, the less thee sees of that gentleman the better, it seems to me."

"I don't see as it is thy business," Ruthanna made answer, somewhat hotly.

John started and flushed at this remark. He had merely thrown a shaft in the dark, and was greatly surprised to find it had struck home. He had gone to the Trents' house on the Sunday evening, and had reconnoitred, as was his habit, through a niche which the blue window-blind had left uncovered, and, seeing the minister and his nephew, had gone away without entering. He had no distinct idea in his mind when he had spoken of the desirability of Ruthanna's avoiding the handsome stranger, but, now that the girl took his advice so hotly, he began to fear that Mr. Calverley's handsome face might have impressed her. Of course Mr. Calverley would admire Ruthanna; she was so pretty, no one could help that; but—

"Well, Ruthanna," began John, with an apparent difficulty of speech, "it's been my business to love thee, and no other, this many a day, which if I havener told thee before I've thought thee must know it, and—"

The girl stood suddenly still, and, covering her pretty face with her hands, began to cry half angrily. "Then don't make it thy business no more," she sobbed; "and I wish thee wouldest go!"

At this point Samson brought forth a prolonged wail, stiffening himself out frantically against the leather strap that held him in his carriage.

"Thee'd best go," cried Ruthanna wrathfully to John Ford, as she tried to soothe her little brother.

"Very well," John answered, his face pale now, his gray eyes bewildered, his freckles painfully evident. And, having said these two words, he took off his hat, wiped his brow with a yellow handkerchief, and pushed back his red hair. After this he stood stupidly gazing at the lithe little figure bending over the perambulator, her tumbled golden hair hiding her cheeks, for the space of a moment. Then he strode away with a mien worthy of Cecil.

Ruthanna looked up presently, and saw his tall figure disappearing round a corner, and sighed impatiently. Yet no later than last Saturday night she had watched for him eagerly when she had gone to the market-hall on the green, and had walked home contentedly at his side while he carried her purchases for her to her father's gate. On Saturday night the black-and-red woollen scarf he wore about his neck had not offended her; she had not noticed that his kindly touch had been given by a hand rough with toil; she had not known how ill-fitting his clothes were. Poor John! the same light that had revealed her family to Ruthanna in their vulgarity had revealed him in his awkwardness. John was not vulgar; but he was so—so different.

When John was out of sight, Ruthanna hurried on to the house where she had to leave the clothes to be mangled. It was one of a row near the Wesleyan chapel, the same row in which Mrs. Billington re-

sided with her husband and fifteen children. Ruthanna would not have needed to take the clothes to the mangle, except that Mrs. Billington was not just now on speaking-terms with Mrs. Stopes, who did the mangling, owing to Mrs. Stopes having intimated that the eldest Miss Billington (who had recently quitted the neighborhood with a soldier) was no better than she ought to be.

It is curious to note how things work together at times to thwart, and at others to bring about, our desires. Mrs. Stopes's daughter Susan had been very fond of a baby brother who now lay under a little green mound in the church-yard near the market-place; and now that he was gone she seemed to hunger for a little one to nurse. Seeing Samson on this evening, who knew her well and was always good with her, and learning that Ruthanna had to go farther and would return this way, Susan begged Ruthanna to leave the baby and call for him on her way back.

This suited Ruthanna exactly. How could she talk to the gentleman supposing Samson should be fractious?

As she was going, Susan called after her, "I seed the fine gentleman going up towards the hill: maybe thee'l see him: he had a coat on made of velvet."

Ruthanna's heart beat so wildly beneath her poor dress, which was so strained across her developing figure, that it seemed the little buttons would certainly start off at the tumultuous beating and give that sweet rounded form more liberty. She almost ran past the bowling-green, past the scattered shops and market-hall, and then into the quiet road which led on to the common. There were no houses on the common, except one little rural inn in a garden with arbors in it, and a long bench outside, where the laborers smoked their pipes and drank their beer drowsily of an evening. There was certainly a little farm-house; but it nestled in a hollow near the park wall of Sir Philip Handover's place, and that was quite a long way from the inn.

In the soft evening light the Wellington Wrekin could still be discerned against the sky; and the long white road leading to Berridge seemed to grow narrower and narrower in the distance till it lost itself in the shadows of the Berridge woods which rose darkly on each side. A winding turf-path through the heather on the right led up to the five mountain-ashes, now rich with berries, where Ruthanna was to meet Cecil Calverley. As she entered it she looked timidly and anxiously round, and her heart failed her; she could not see him. But he was there, hiding behind a tree that he might watch her advance.

Poor little heart! how easily it had been captured! and in these first hours of capture pain claimed its right to bear love company. Mr. Calverley was not there, she thought, or he would be looking out for her. Perhaps, after all, he had only been making game of her. Perhaps he had forgotten that he had asked her to come. This last thought was the bitterest of all to Ruthanna,—so bitter that she sat down on the turf and began to cry.

The poor child was only sixteen, and her romantic little soul had never found its hero before. She was very ignorant, but there was the possibility of a passion of love in her uncultured soul, which once

roused nothing could quench ; and Cecil Calverley had roused it. Her whole being was changed since yesterday. Those who have loved know what this means.

Cecil let Ruthanna sit crying to herself a few minutes. He knew, experienced man of the world that he was, that a little unhappiness would make the consolation he could offer all the more potent.

He would not have waited, however, had he noticed a lanky figure of a youth approaching Ruthanna from across the heather. He was quite startled when the youth stopped near to the girl, stooping down close to her face. "That must be that infernal John Ford," thought Cecil, angrily. But it was not John Ford : it was Haydn Blackhouse.

"What is the matter with thee, Ruthanna?" Cecil heard him say ; - but he could not hear Ruthanna's reply. "I can't abear to see thee cry, Ruthanna," Haydn went on, putting a hand on her shoulder.

"Dunner touch me!" cried Ruthanna, springing to her feet and angrily facing the astonished flutist. "Go and mind thy own affairs."

"Then it is thee I mun mind, sure enough," said Haydn. "Oh, Ruthanna, dunner thee know I love thee?"

Cecil felt ready to take him by the throat.

"I want none of thy love!" cried Ruthanna, passionately, dashing the tears from her eyes, and then clinching her little hands. "Go away!—or I will."

"Oh, then I mun be the one," said Haydn, resignedly ; "but I will talk to thee again when thee will listen to me." With this he slowly moved away among the heather till he reached the high-road, after which he was no longer visible.

Ruthanna stood still, looking towards the road. As she stood, Cecil Calverley came behind her, and, stooping towards her ear till his silky moustache touched her cheek, said, in his tenderest tone, "My little Ruthanna!"

As even the educated act on impulse when in love, can we expect the uneducated to be self-controlled? Ruthanna turned and stretched her hands out to Mr. Calverley with a glad cry ; and he—well, he did what most men would have done under such circumstances : he took her little figure into his arms.

"Ruthanna," said Cecil, when he had at last freed her, "was that John Ford who was talking to you just now?"

"Oh, no," laughed the girl, looking up with the traces of tears still on her cheeks in the gathering twilight ; "that was Haydn Blackhouse,—him as plays the flute so beautiful at the Brooktown chapel."

"Oh, he plays the flute, does he?" said Cecil, sarcastically. "He plays at making love, too, it seems."

"I think he meant it," said Ruthanna, reflectively : "he's never gone with any one, and he's once given me a book-marker."

Cecil winced. "And this John Ford?" he asked.

"Oh, John Ford wants me to have him : he's Abraham's friend."

"And you mean to have him, Ruthanna?"

"No," the girl answered.

"Why?" queried Cecil, taking Ruthanna's little hand in his, and looking earnestly into her face.

There was no answer.

"Why?" repeated Cecil, stooping lower over the bowed head.

Still no answer.

"Tell me why," Cecil reiterated, with his face now so close to hers that she felt his hot breath on her cheek.

"I canner tell thee," cried Ruthanna.

"Shall I tell you?" asked Cecil, passing an arm round her. "Ruthanna, shall I tell you?"

For reply she hid her face on his breast and began to sob.

"Ruthanna," he said, softly and with a wild tumult at his heart, "is it that you care for me a little?"

At that moment voices became audible from the high-road.

"I mun go," cried the girl, breaking from him.

"Then meet me here to-morrow evening," said Cecil; "and, Ruthanna, you will give me but one little kiss before you go, won't you?"

Poor little ignorant Ruthanna! she raised her sweet face and kissed him.

CHAPTER VII.

CECIL KEEPS TRYST IN VAIN.

"THERE is a letter for you, Cecil," Mrs. Lane said next morning as the young man appeared in the breakfast-room.

Cecil glanced at it, and exclaimed, "It's from Victoria: so I am pretty sure to get a wiggling—excuse the expression, aunt."

"Does Victoria usually give you what you term 'wiggings'?" inquired Mrs. Lane, with an amused smile.

"Oh, doesn't she?" replied Cecil, with much feeling. "You'll excuse me if I open the letter, aunt," he went on, stretching out his white hand towards the packet. "It is just as well to get it over."

"My most immaculate and handsome cousin," the letter began. "Of course she begins with satire straight off," Cecil commented. "It wouldn't be Victoria if she didn't."

"Aunt Agatha asks me to write to you, as she is too tired, and Violet has her 'vicar-headache,'" the letter went on. "You perhaps don't know what vicar-headache is: you are very stupid, I know, though the house is very dull without you to laugh at." ("To laugh at," muttered Cecil.) "Well, vicar-headache is of different sorts. There is the sort I get in church, for instance, when I hear about—well, never mind what,—but the most of whatever one does hear in church. Then of course there is that other form of the same complaint which is occasionally worse,—viz., curate-headache. Violet's vicar-headache differs from both these, for it has nothing to do with sermons, nor with speech at all, I fancy,—more likely the opposite. But that will change. Mr. Fairbank is always here now, and Uncle Calverley and Aunt Agatha seem to like it. I could never, I do think, marry a clergyman,

—unless I could get him to say a ‘little swear’ first, just to make him a bit human. But Violet—she is cut out for it.

“I suppose I am betraying secrets, though. Well, I am a perfect sieve where other people’s secrets are concerned. When I find out what *your* present occupations are,—not those Uncle and Aunt Lane know about, but the others,—I shall as likely as not convey my information across the dinner-table to any one who likes to listen. Now, Cecil, don’t begin to twist your moustache in that angry way!” (Cecil dropped his hand, which really was so engaged, and went on reading.) “You will never stop me from saying what I like.

“By the way, we had a grand time at Mr. Morrison’s studio on Saturday afternoon. His house is just delightful,—such dear old tapestry and Venetian vases, and curtains which I guess made me break one of the commandments. And his pictures—well, they *are* pictures. One he is now doing is just the best bit of real coloring I’ve seen. Of course it is for the Academy. He has chosen a spot quite near Heatherdene: you will recognize it at once. He is going to call it ‘The Wilderness of Wild Flowers.’

“And that man *can* play the violin. Why, he can do Beethoven’s ‘Kreutzer’! I play the piano part for him. Why don’t you learn the violin? Perhaps you’d better not try, though. It might be another case of *blackberries*.

“Aunt Agatha hopes you will come here before going back to Cambridge. You did not say how long you meant to stay in that benighted Black Country.

“I don’t suppose I shall be here if you do come. I’ve had a letter from papa, and he says my half-brother Randal is going to Paris to look after some business, so I had better go over there and visit my aunt Angélique for a few weeks and see him. Randal will stay at a bachelor hotel. He is American, like his mother and father, I can tell you, and he doesn’t quite hit it off with Aunt Angélique. However, I shall enjoy myself, for Randal will be sure to take me out to a play in the evening. Hoping you are being duly appreciated and bowed down to,

“I am your (*can’t* find a suitable adjective!) cousin,
“VICTORIA.”

“Is there much news?” Mrs. Lane inquired, as Cecil replaced the letter in the envelope.

“Not a great deal, aunt,” said Cecil, a little shortly. “Victoria’s half-brother, Randal Westbourne, is going to Paris, and her father wishes her to go to Madame Meunier’s (his sister, you know), so that she can see him. Randal is the son of Uncle Hippolyte’s second wife. He is about the same age as Victoria, and is mixed up with the silver-mines.”

“I have heard so little these many years,” said Mrs. Lane, with a little sigh, which she covered at once with a light laugh, as she set the baby up to the table in its white frock and blue ribbons. That baby would have attracted some people, it was so dainty and so merry. But not Cecil. He did not care for babies in the abstract. In fact, he

did not as yet care for anything or any one that could not minister to him in some way. Mere dependence and helplessness did not call forth his love. He even felt annoyed with his aunt for sighing. Was it his fault that she was not on visiting-terms with her family?

When Mr. Lane appeared, equipped in a loose alpaca coat, he smiled benevolently on his nephew. He was holding an open letter in his hand. "You are to be interviewed this afternoon, Cecil," he said, as he seated himself at the breakfast-table. "John Ford and Abraham Trent, two of our more prominent young men, are coming with a request from the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, of which they are members, that you will give them a lecture, or an address, or something, next Monday. I would if I were you," went on the minister, persuasively: "it would encourage them so. You see, it is not often that we get a University man among us."

Cecil did not reply at first. He had an uncomfortable feeling of "shock." It was not the idea of lecturing that shocked him,—he was too young and too opinionated for that: it was that he was to meet John Ford.

"Oh, anything you like, uncle," he said, at last; "but I don't suppose I can interest these rustics."

"There you are indeed mistaken, Cecil," said Mr. Lane, warmly. "These young men take a most intelligent interest in everything. John Ford in particular is really one of the most persevering men in acquiring knowledge that I have ever known, and, though he clings to his native dialect out of modesty, or love for it, he can when he chooses speak as good English as the rest. Why, he has positively mastered the first six books of Euclid by himself, and is at this moment reading Cicero's orations against Catiline, having taught himself the rudiments of Latin from Heury's first Latin book. *Balbus murum ædificat*, you know."

The good minister was quite out of breath. But Cecil's tone had somehow put him on his mettle. He was truly proud of his nephew, and looked forward confidently to his being senior wrangler of his year; yet he did not see why he should look down quite so much on these young men who were striving for knowledge without his advantages.

"I don't think you understand me," said Cecil, politely, but not quite truthfully. "I meant that my own ability to interest any one is so small."

"Cecil," interposed Mrs. Lane, with that penetrating half-smile of hers which always reminded him of Victoria, "don't you think you have expressed yourself just a little too modestly?"

It was a good thing for Cecil that the baby here demanded instant attention by nearly upsetting her high chair; for he felt he could not have replied to such an expression as his aunt had used,—and in such a tone, too.

"John Ford and Abraham Trent will call here at six o'clock," the minister observed, as he took the top off an egg.

"That is unfortunate," observed Cecil, "for I was thinking of exploring the old ruins at Berridge this afternoon. However, if I leave

a note expressing my willingness to do what they desire, do you think that would do?"

The minister gave an equivocal assent. He would have preferred that his nephew should see the deputation; also he was aware that Cecil could have easily chosen another afternoon for visiting the ruins. However, he said nothing. Cecil would give the lecture, and that was something. But he sighed in a resigned sort of way as he unfolded his *Daily News* to bury himself in the oratory of his favorite Gladstone.

As for Cecil, he fell to thinking of his cousin's letter, and internally anathematized "that ass Morrison." Victoria seemed mightily taken with him, to be sure. There are people who when we once know them dominate the mind, absent or present. Victoria was one of these. Cecil could not forget her for a single day, even though Ruthanna's sweet looks and simple ways stirred him till his pulses beat wildly and (a rare occurrence with Cecil) he almost forgot himself in the thought of her maiden loveliness. To-night he would see her,—hold her in his arms,—yet Victoria seemed to force her proud, handsome presence into his consciousness.

But Cecil was doomed to be disappointed that evening. When John Ford and Abraham Trent called at the manse to interview him, he was on the heath, waiting for Ruthanna under the five mountain-ashes. And she did not come. The reason we will give in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. TRENT ADMINISTERS AN ANTIDOTE.

WHEN Ruthanna left Cecil on Monday evening she went straight to Mrs. Stopes's to fetch her little brother. Susan met her at the door with this exclamation :

"Thee art in for it, Ruthanna! Mrs. Billington come home and seed Samson at our door, and her took herself right back to tell thy mother, and Joseph he come and fetched Samson, and he said as how thy mother had summut nice in pickle for thee when thee come home."

The tears welled up into Ruthanna's pretty eyes. "I mun go," she said : "I reckon it wunner mak it better if I keep away." And with that she fled along past the chapel, past the ruined blacksmith's forge, and along the Birmingham road, until she reached her father's house, which stood alone in the desolate environment.

It took some courage to enter the little gate into the garden and pass the kitchen window ; but Ruthanna rushed on through very fear. No one knew better than she did what her mother's temper was when roused. She knew, too, that she could hope nothing from her father. If Abraham had been at home, he would have put in a word for her ; but he was at the Mutual Improvement meeting, and would not be home till late. Joe was there, but he always sided with his parents.

Ruthanna opened the kitchen door timidly and entered. It was as if a soft white rabbit had entered the cage of a lion. Mrs. Trent

rushed upon the child and seized her by her shoulders, shouting, as she shook her till the room seemed to be going round,—

"So thee hast been off with Haydn Blackhouse, has thee?—thou forward indecent hussy! I'll teach thee—I'll teach thee to leave thee brother and go strumpeting off with young men. I know now why thee put on thee best frock. Best frock, indeed! I'll give thee best frock! I'll tak the pride out of thee!"

With these words she dragged the poor unresisting child to the table, where lay a huge pair of scissors which had been converted out of sheep-shears at the forges. Taking the sunny curling locks of hair in her hand roughly enough, she began her punishment. Snip! and a dozen golden curls lay in a heap on the brick floor. Snip! and the rest followed. With a wild cry of utter wretchedness Ruthanna sank upon the floor amid the shining hair. Her hat fell from her shorn head, and she hid her face in her hands, sobbing convulsively.

"We'll see if thee'l leave off gadding now!" said Mrs. Trent, triumphantly.

Suddenly, as if fired by her mother's triumph, Ruthanna dashed the tears from her face, and rose to her feet. There was a look of resolution on her young face, and her little hands were shut tightly.

"Her's got her monkey up pretty fair," observed Joseph, complacently.

"Her'd better mind what her's up to!" snapped the mother. "There never was a woman as had such children. I wish I'd never seed one of them, I do!"

Ruthanna was walking from the room, but all at once she turned, and, stooping down, picked up one long golden curl.

"Oh!" sneered the mother, "that's for Haydn Blackhouse, I suppose. But wait till thee gets a chance to give it him, that's all!"

Ruthanna made no reply, but quietly left the room, as her mother swept up the lovely tresses with a long broom, and, having got them close to the fender, threw them in handfuls upon the fire.

"There," she said, addressing her favorite Joseph (for Joseph was her favorite, though she had just expressed the wish that she had never seen one of her children), "I've taught her a lesson."

Ruthanna's bedroom was a small garret at the top of the house. Its only window was in the roof: so the view was limited to a patch of sky.

At such times as Ruthanna fell under the scourge of her mother's wrath (and she had so fallen pretty often before this), she used to stretch her young limbs on her little fold-up bedstead, which was close to the wall under the sloping roof, and stare up at this patch of sky. It presented to her a varying picture, and each variation was to the simple child like the face of a friend. There was the patch of blue, still and solemn, that, without her understanding why, filled her with an infinite rest. Should she feel so when she was dead? she wondered. If so, death must be a pleasant thing. Then there was the cloud-swept patch of sky, all confusion and unrest, that made her almost giddy as she watched it. And there was the sullen, cruel, settled gray, that made her infinitely sad.

But at night, when the moon shone, and coyly hid herself behind some fleecy cloud, to dart out again and smile down as if enjoying the fun, Ruthanna would laugh softly to herself for very joy. What she loved best, however, were the faithful stars that shone down the night through, like kind spirits sent to guard her.

To-night the rain began to fall, and pelted pitilessly on the skylight. There was nothing but darkness and desolation. Ruthanna bolted her door and fell face downward on the bed, and sobbed and moaned as she buried her shorn head in the pillow. What if her mother were to find out the truth? But Cecil should have that curl; for he loved her, she felt he did, and some time he would take her away with him,—away from them all.

The thought gave her courage. She rose from the bed and sat down on the box which contained her Sunday clothes, and looked round her little room. She loved this room. It was her own. It had so often sheltered her from the storms of her mother's wrath. Moreover, it was to her simple mind luxurious. The box which did duty for a dressing-table was draped with pink lining and muslin, and the little looking-glass, which had a crack all across it, was decorated with a bit of muslin and a pink bow. The pin-cushion was covered with her own crochet-work, as was the pink comb-bag which hung on a nail in the whitewashed wall. This whitewashed wall was ornamented with picture-almanacs which she had got from the grocer on the green at successive Christmases and had treasured carefully. Then just over the bed there was a text, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," which John Ford had inappropriately given her. Ruthanna looked round on all these things. "When I go, and am made a lady of," she said to herself, "I'll tak all these things with me, and they shall be in my grand room as I shall have."

Do not let the reader imagine from this last reflection of Ruthanna's that she valued Cecil's evident attachment because of the position she might suppose it would give her. She loved him, and would have followed him faithfully though he could not have offered her a roof to cover her. Such are some women. And men break their hearts.

Ruthanna sat on her box, her little hands clasped round one of her knees, her shorn head thrown back; and a smile broke over her face as she listened to the splash of the rain on the skylight. What did it all matter, since Cecil loved her?

In the mean time, Mr. Trent had come home from Wolverhampton, whither he had betaken himself for his "boiler Monday" outing. He found his wife in one of her contrary moods, which was not an unusual occurrence. The first indication of the fact was that, instead of supper being laid upon the table, that article of furniture was occupied by a pile of folded linen.

Mr. Trent seated himself in his high-backed wooden chair and pulled off his boots. Then he waited. Mrs. Trent hummed the tune of "When I survey the wondrous cross," and looked as unchristian as was possible as she turned over a heap of woollen things in a clothes-basket.

"Well, missus," said Mr. Trent, after a protracted waiting for any

signs of supper, "when art thee going to leave off and get summut to eat?"

Joseph smiled. He was hungry himself.

"Thee mun wait till Abraham come in," said Mrs. Trent, shortly, and then went on with the next line of her hymn :

"And pour contempt on all my pride."

"Well, missus," said the iron-worker, sardonically, "it 'ud tak a good lot of that to put thy pride out!"

Joseph chuckled. A skirmish between his parents amused him, just as it amused him to set his mongrel terrier Jim (which he kept at a shed at the iron-works) at some hapless cat, or at some dog of less mettle. Joseph was seventeen, and was considered stupid by every one but his mother. One thing was certain, affection had somehow been left out when he was endowed with his other faculties. He loved nothing, and without love there can be no conception of pain,—at least of other people's pain. He had laughed when his sister's bright curls had fallen under the shears. He laughed now that there was a prospect of a passage of arms between his parents.

"Now hold thy tongue, mester," cried Mrs. Trent, straightening herself ominously. "I've had enough from that wench of thine to last me for one day!"

It was Mrs. Trent's custom when angry with one of her offspring to allude to him or her as the especial and exclusive property of her husband, while on occasions such as the gaining of a Sunday-school prize, or anything which might be supposed to reflect credit on the family, the child in question was hers particularly. "That wench of thine," repeated Mrs. Trent, seizing a jug shaped like a barrel with stripes of blue round it.

Mr. Trent watched his wife open the trap-door which led into the cellar, and slowly descend the ladder, and he said nothing. This was not so much out of consideration for his wife, however, as from fear that an argument might delay supper.

When Mrs. Trent had descended the ladder so far that only her head appeared above the floor, she called to Joseph to bring her a candle. He slowly rose, and, taking the article in question from the chimney-piece, proceeded to light it by thrusting the candle itself between the bars of the fire-grate.

"By jiggers!" he exclaimed, elegantly, "if there ain't a bit of Ruthanna's hair sticking to the bar, all frizzled and black, and shaped just like a curl!"

Mr. Trent started up and stooped to examine the phenomenon for himself. Yes, there upon the bar was a charred curl.

"What's the meaning of this, missus?" inquired the iron-worker, looking more cadaverous than ever as he strode to the opening in the floor through which his wife's head was projecting. Somehow he connected the charred curl with the last words the girl's mother had uttered.

"I've burnt the lot, that's all," said Mrs. Trent, fiercely, shaking the jug at her husband with one hand, while she held on to the floor

with the other. "And I'll do it again if her does what her has to-day any more!"

Mrs. Trent might have found some difficulty in accomplishing this threat, for some time to come at least. However, her husband did not note the absurdity of the remark, he was so full of the thought of Ruthanna.

"If thee hast hurt the little wench," he hissed, "thee shalt repent it!"

To say Mrs. Trent was surprised is to give but a faint idea of her sensation. Never before had she known her husband to take Ruthanna's part like this. There was a simple explanation, after all. Mr. Trent had that day met Mr. Honeyman, one of the circuit stewards at the big chapel, and he had said, "My wife has been noticing your little daughter a good deal, Mr. Trent, and she says she is one of the prettiest and most refined-looking girls she ever saw."

This speech elevated poor Ruthanna in her father's eyes from an unfortunate consequence of connubial bliss into a marketable article. Mr. Honeyman had a son who was a chemist and druggist in the market-place, and he was unmarried.

"Well," cried Mrs. Trent, "if thee wishes Ruthanna to be gadding with Haydn Blackhouse——"

"Has her been with him?" inquired the iron-worker, anxiously.

"Yes, her has," replied the mother. "Joseph was told so."

"Still," muttered the father, as he went back to his chair, "thee didst wrong to cut off her hair."

Mrs. Trent's head disappeared now, and her voice was soon heard below, singing, sepulchrally, "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast," and this to an accompaniment of the running of beer into the jug.

So are white wings trailed in this world of ours.

It was late when Abraham returned from the Mutual Improvement Society. He found his mother and father seated on the fire side of the table, not towards the table, but facing each other. They were eating their supper. Joseph sat asleep on the settle.

Abraham drew up a chair and sat down at the table opposite his parents.

"It was a fine lecture to-night," he said, as he cut some bread and cheese; "and next Monday Mr. Calverley may give us something. Me and John Ford are going to the manse to ask him to-morrow."

"Thy mother's cut Ruthanna's hair off," said Mr. Trent, in reply to this. "Her's been gadding with Haydn Blackhouse, and thy mother has cut her hair off!"

Abraham dropped his knife and stared at his father and then at his mother, as if not understanding.

"Cut Ruthanna's hair off!" he repeated, slowly. "Mother, thee never can have done it?"

"I just have, then," said Mrs. Trent, nodding her head several times. "I'll give her some more next time as her goes with Haydn Blackhouse."

"I don't believe her *has* been with him," Abraham said. "It's John Ford as her'd be with, if any one; and her's not been with him."

"Her'll neither go with Haydn Blackhouse nor John Ford," said Mr. Trent, with dignity. "Me and my wife and my family are a stroke above that, I reckon."

Abraham stared in amazement. What was this new doctrine he was listening to? Had not his father till now encouraged the intimacy of John Ford with his sister? What could have so suddenly changed him?

Mr. Trent was sitting with his long legs stretched out so far that his bootless feet rested on their heels quite close to his wife's chair. She suddenly perceived them, and (we regret to record it) administered so vicious a kick with her own booted and not infantile foot as to make the poor iron-worker draw his legs up with a cry of agony. Joseph woke up and laughed. Mrs. Trent also laughed.

"Thee should keep thee great feet to theesel', then," she observed.

"Oh, missus, thee did hurt me!" said the iron-worker, rubbing his foot. "Why couldner thee tell me thee wanted me to move?"

Abraham rose, and, taking his plate of bread and cheese, left the room.

"Dunner thee put any of thee wet things on the clean chintz chairs," Mrs. Trent called after him.

He made no answer. He was grieved to his very soul for this little sister. She must be in her room now, he knew; and certainly she had had no supper. It was for her he had brought up the bread and cheese: as for himself, he could eat nothing now. Why need there be hard words in a home at all? he pondered. Surely a home without jars was a possibility. He entered his room and sat down to wait for his parents and Joseph to go to bed; then he would carry the supper to his sister.

Presently Samson cried, and Mrs. Trent came up-stairs to get him to sleep again. His father and brother followed, and soon all was silent except for his mother's patting of the baby and irritable singing of

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all,"

which she repeated again and again as she patted Samson's back with sounding blows which could be distinctly heard all over the house.

At last the singing and patting ceased, and Abraham crept noiselessly up to his sister's door. He stood and listened for a moment. He could hear no sound but the dropping of the rain on the skylight. He tapped softly. There was a movement in the room. A moment more, and the door opened.

"I thought it was thee," said Ruthanna. Indeed, many a time in the past Abraham had come to bring her food and try to comfort her after one of Mrs. Trent's outbursts.

"Strike a match, Ruthanna," said Abraham. The girl did so, and lit her candle. She was fully dressed, just as she had come home. Even her jacket was on. "Thee hast heerd?" she asked, as she put her hands up to her shorn head, the tears filling her eyes and her lip quivering.

"Yes," he answered, sadly, "I've heerd ; but thee doest look beautiful still, thy hair waves so, and thy little head is so pretty," he added, consolingly. "John Ford will like thee just as well, I'll warrant. But tell me, Ruthanna, thee wasn't with Haydn Blackhouse to-night, was thee?"

Ruthanna hung her head. If she explained, it might lead to suspicion of Mr. Calverley. Better anything than that. It might be best not to undeceive them all about Haydn.

"I was with him a few minutes," she said.

"Oh, Ruthanna!" said Abraham, reproachfully. "When John Ford, as 'ud mak thee so good a husband, is ready to tak thee!" He could say no more. He was disappointed. So he placed the plate containing the bread and cheese on the dressing-table, and went back to his room.

Next morning Abraham and his father were gone to work when Ruthanna came down. But Joseph was there, and seemed to find infinite amusement in his sister's changed appearance.

"Thee art not going out again *this week*," Mrs. Trent said to Ruthanna, "so thee needn't think it." This was why on this Tuesday evening Cecil waited in vain under the mountain-ashes. He did not go back to the manse till he felt certain Ruthanna could not be coming. Then he wrote to Victoria in the dining-room, while his aunt and her abigail slaughtered moths in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER IX.

SOFT TURF AND STILL WATER.

IT was not until Thursday evening that Ruthanna was permitted to go out, and then in all probability she would not have been allowed to go, had not Mrs. Trent been attacked with toothache, which usually brought her down at least to zero. Ruthanna must do some shopping, and among other shops she must visit the chemist's to get some poppy-heads to make a poultice. Ruthanna made up her mind, as may be surmised, to go to the heath on the chance of Cecil's being there.

Cecil was there. He had been there each day. As he came down the green path among the heather and bracken to meet her, his face showed a mingled look of anxiety and pleasure.

As for Ruthanna, she no longer remembered the long hours at home since Monday, in which she had constantly heard Samson's peevish cries, with an accompaniment of the bangs of the flat-iron on the ironing-board, and the shrill voice of her mother singing "When I survey the wondrous cross." She only saw Cecil approaching her, the setting sun glinting on his wonderful coat.

The weather had been very dry since Monday; in fact, Wednesday and to-day had been almost like July. Cecil had been lying on the turf with Herrick's poems for company, and had read "To Anthea" without being able in the least to make up his mind whether the poem expressed his feelings towards Victoria or towards Ruthanna. Both

were so attractive, and so different. Still, he had no notion of getting out of his difficulty by possessing both, as Timar possessed Timea and Noëmi in "Timar's Two Worlds."

After all, the present is most potent, where this sort of indecision exists, as Timar thought.

Cecil reached Ruthanna's side and took both her little hands in his. Then a look of amazement spread over his face.

"Ruthanna!" he exclaimed. "Where are your curls?"

Then followed the sad recital of Mrs. Trent's wrath; and Cecil removed the shabby hat, to regard the little shorn head. Every bit of the short hair seemed to be doing its best to make up for Ruthanna's loss! how that hair twisted itself into dainty ringlets, to be sure,—nestling, oh, so lovingly, about the shapely head!

"You are lovelier than ever, Ruthanna!" cried the young man, rapturously. "You look like a little page in the theatre!"

"I have brought you a curl," said Ruthanna, timidly, and she searched in her pocket for it. "Oh, I know!" she said, blushing; "it is here." And she unbuttoned her dress and slipped her hand into her bosom, hastily withdrawing a little packet.

Cecil took the long golden curl from its envelope, and reverently kissed it. "Come," he said, "I will show you my couch."

It was a spot near the mountain-ashes, a sloping patch of soft turf, round which the tall bracken grew abundantly. The two pushed their way through this bracken, and then Cecil seated himself, and drew her down beside him.

"Ruthanna," he began, as he placed an arm about her, "I must be back at Cambridge in a few weeks, and I must see as much of you as I can till then. If your mother won't let you come out, how am I to see you? Yesterday I passed your house twice and looked at the windows."

"I was a good lot in my room," said Ruthanna, "and the window of that is in the roof."

"Well, there isn't a balloon one could hire, I suppose?" said Cecil, laughing. Ruthanna laughed too.

"See," said Cecil, "this is my pillow;" and he lay back on the turf, his head resting on a little hillock. "And yours shall be of velvet," he went on, as he gently drew her down till her head rested on his shoulder. "Tell me, Ruthanna," he said, in his most liquid tones, as he laid his cheek on her short curls, "are you happy so?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" cried the poor child, "so happy! so happy! I canner care for no one now!"

For a long time they rested so. Then Cecil produced his book. "Shall I read you some of my favorites?" he asked her. Of course she said yes, as she would have done to almost anything just then.

Cecil opened the volume and read verses at random. The first he chose was ominous, had Ruthanna been able to grasp it; but she heard his voice rather than Herrick's words:

That love last long, let it thy first care be
To find a wife that is most fit for thee:

Be she too wealthy, or too poor, be sure
Love in extremes can never long endure.

He turned to another, and before reading it brought his lips quite close to hers, as if to drink their fragrance :

Breathe, Julia, breathe, and I'll protest,
Nay, more, I'll deeply swear,
That all the spices of the East
Are circumfused there.

While he read this (and we must state that Ruthanna did not in the least understand it), there was a rustle in the bracken, which neither heard ; and presently John Ford's eyes were looking wildly down upon them, as they lay, she with her head upon Cecil's shoulder, he with the book held in his white fingers, reading aloud.

John Ford gazed at the pair for the space of a few seconds, silent and awful. His face grew so deadly white that the freckles stood out as if he had covered his face with bran. Then he staggered away through the bracken and strode rapidly towards Berridge. He never once slackened his pace till he reached the tributary lane which led to the Berridge Lakes. He turned into this at a slower rate. It was wild and dreary. Its hedges were tall and straggling, and the deep ruts of the road were grass-grown. Trailing blackberry-bushes had intruded themselves into the very middle of the road. The banks were brown with fallen leaves. The place was very still, but for the hoarse croak of the frogs and the distant rasping note of a late corn-crake. A bat occasionally swept down across the path, and a huge night-moth struck John Ford on the cheek in its swift flight. "Oh, God ! oh, God !" he cried to himself in his agony, but he looked for no answer from the God he called upon ; he only smote upon his breast, crying aloud and expecting no help. What help could come to him now ? How he had loved Ruthanna he had never dreamed till now that she was lost to him. And he had come to search for her to-night to comfort her ; for Abraham had told him about Mrs. Trent's anger, and about Haydn Blackhouse ; and he had known that even if she had been seen with him there had been nothing in it. And now what had he seen ! Oh, it was maddening to think of it !

As he emerged from the lane and came upon the opening which revealed the three lakes, a thought of revenge entered his mind. He was to call at the manse on this night for a book the minister had promised to lend him ; he might easily mention having seen Mr. Calverley with Ruthanna. Should he do so ?

Of these three lakes two were large and one was small. Between the two larger was a raised piece of grass-grown land no wider than an ordinary road. It stretched from bank to bank. The lakes themselves were edged by thick plantations, except at the point at which John Ford had entered. It was a melancholy spot, but it suited John's mood. He walked along the strip of land between the lakes, and presently sat down and abstractedly watched some water-spiders skimming the still waters, on which the sunset glow still lingered.

He thought long, and without conscious words. His sorrow, his love, must be buried. As for revenge, it had died almost as it was born. Could he hurt her? And to hurt him in whose arms he had seen her, would it not hurt her?

No, no; he would say nothing. But if this fine gentleman should play his darling false!— He did not complete the thought in words, but stared at the dark waters of the lake, on which evening shadows were fast gathering.

In the mean time Ruthanna and Cecil had parted, he more charmed than ever by her simple loveliness, she more utterly given into his keeping.

CHAPTER X.

MR. TRENT'S EXTRAVAGANCE.

It was on her way home that Ruthanna called at the chemist's; and she was not a little astonished to see her father seated on one of the two Austrian bent-wood chairs which were supplied for customers. Mr. Honeyman, junior, was behind the counter, talking with him.

"Me and my family are *re*-spectable and *re*-pected," Mr. Trent was observing as she entered. He must have come himself for the poppy-heads for her mother's toothache, Ruthanna concluded, and was about to withdraw, believing herself to have been unobserved.

"Ruthanna, come in!" shouted the iron-worker as the door swung to. She obeyed.

Mr. Honeyman, who was a young man of some ability and at least the usual amount of penetration, wore a look of bored amusement on his face, if one can use such a combination of words. He was amused, and he was certainly bored.

"Her's getting quite a woman, isn't her?" said Mr. Trent jocosely of his daughter; and then he added, with an air of unequalled generosity, "Thee shalt have some new things, and be turned into long frocks."

The girl stood silent, her eyes fixed on a glass case of toilet requisites. She felt hurt, she could not have explained why, at being discussed before this man.

"Ha!" ejaculated young Honeyman, "they do grow up, don't they! I suppose, now, one of these rising young iron-workers will be marrying your daughter after a bit?"

Mr. Trent rose from his chair and pushed up the unstarched corners of his collar before he replied, "Me and my family has got money for a holiday,—or for a marriage potion. My wench mun look above an iron-worker."

"But don't you think," laughed the chemist, "that if you teach her to look down on an iron-worker for a *husband* she may end by looking down on an iron-worker for a *father*?"

Mr. Trent looked uneasy, and abstractedly squeezed a scent-vaporizer, covering himself with essence of white rose. He was about to reply, when a customer entered.

"Have thee got the poppy-heads?" Ruthanna inquired of her father.

"Poppy-heads?" repeated Mr. Trent, abstractedly: "I know about no poppy-heads: I come in about a little circuit business."

Ruthanna purchased the poppy-heads, and then withdrew with her father. "She really is an uncommonly pretty girl," thought the chemist to himself as they left the shop.

"Now, Ruthanna," said her father, as they strode along the green, "we're going to Johnson's shop, and I'm a-going to buy you a frock made of velvet, and things for a hat, and thee shalt have a new jacket."

Ruthanna was too much surprised to say anything. It was clear that her father meant just what he had said, for as soon as they reached the shop he entered it, and of course she followed. "I want some velvet for a dress for my little wench," he said to the shopman,—"not velvetina, but regular velvet. I've money in my pocket to pay down. We 'as money, me and my family."

"What color would you like?" asked the shopman.

"Her looks nice in blue," responded Mr. Trent, promptly.

"We have a good piece of navy blue velvet," said the shopman. "It is new in, and very good: it came by mistake."

"We'll have it," said Mr. Trent. "The price don't matter. How much will it take for a dress made fashionable and long?"

"Are you going to give our new dress-maker the making of it?" inquired the shopman; "for I'll have her in to help us if you are."

"Oh, yes, we will have her," said Mr. Trent, boisterously.

Then followed a consultation, which ended in Ruthanna's being in prospective possession of a dress and jacket of the blue velvet, the latter to be trimmed with gray fur, and a Gainsborough hat of the same material, which was to be decorated with gray feathers.

As Ruthanna walked home at her father's side, her heart was beating wildly. What could it mean, this sudden generosity on the part of her father? Could it be that he suspected Mr. Calverley's love for her, and approved? She almost felt as if it must be so: yet she had often heard him express strong opinions against a girl of the people marrying a gentleman. If he had changed his views, what had brought it about? Just a few good-natured and meaningless words from old Mr. Honeyman, the circuit steward; that was all. Only Ruthanna could never have guessed this.

Mr. Honeyman was looked up to by the Methodists of this neighborhood as being in a most superior station. For one thing, he "did nothing," which to the popular mind is synonymous with being a gentleman. He had made money in the colonies, and had returned to his native village and built himself a fine house. His son Howard had been educated at King Edward's grammar-school at Walsall. Then his father had set him up as a chemist; and he was the only chemist,—just as the stationer, who also kept the post-office, was the only stationer.

But no thought of young Honeyman troubled Ruthanna. She knew all about him, of course,—i.e., what the rest of the village knew:

for instance, that in his school-boy days (and these were not so long ago) and while he was learning his business at Southall's at Birmingham he had played the usual number of pranks, and sown perhaps a trifle less than the usual percentage of wild oats. One other thing Ruthanna knew which every one did not, and that was that the late vicar's daughter—the one that played the organ in church—had gone into a convent owing to this Mr. Honeyman's coldness. Haydn Blackhouse had told Ruthanna this one day, and had stated that only he and another knew it. We don't ourselves vouch for the reason, but that the girl did go into a convent is a fact. Let it be granted, then (as Euclid says), that Howard Honeyman was a young man not unlikely to inspire the tender passion in the fair sex. But, though his father was circuit steward, the young chemist did not attend the Methodist chapel, but the church on the green: so he did not see so much of the iron-worker's pretty daughter as he might otherwise have done. He thought of her a good deal on this evening, however, for he had really looked at her, and she had a lovely face.

When she reached home with her father, and he told Mrs. Trent of his purchases, there was such an outburst as may easily be imagined. No woman likes her particular province to be invaded by men,—or scarcely any. Ruthanna's wardrobe was undoubtedly her affair.

"A nice sight her'll look," exclaimed Mrs. Trent, after a somewhat vague outburst of ten minutes' duration, "with a long frock on on Sundays and short of a week-day!"

"Can't thee splice a piece on to her day-frock?" inquired the iron-worker, anxiously.

"Splice a piece on to thee!" cried the mother, derisively. "Thee'll just have to buy her a long frock for days too, now!"

Mrs. Trent thought this remark a "clincher," for, as a rule, her husband was not particularly anxious to part with his money. To her surprise, however, he took out some gold and flung it on the table, saying, "If that be all, missus, it's soon settled."

That did not settle it, however, and nothing did till Mrs. Trent had obtained the price of a black silk gown for herself. Then peace reigned.

As they were all departing for their bedrooms, Abraham whispered to his sister, "I'm so glad thee will have a pretty frock, Ruthanna; and thy little short curls do become thee rarely!"

It was after all the household was asleep that a peculiar wail broke upon the night. It woke Joseph, who sat up and listened. It came from outside, and appeared to be right under his window. Slowly and carefully he lifted the blind, and in the dim starlight could discern a figure in a curious attitude. He listened again. Yes, there could be no doubt about it,—that figure was performing upon a flute!

Joseph cautiously raised the sash of his window. Then the strains of "My Lodging is on the Cold Ground" unmistakably greeted him. Joseph was, as we have said, not naturally kind-hearted, and what he did on this occasion was in keeping with his character. He selected one of the geranium-pots which adorned his window-sill,—the one immediately over the unfortunate flutist,—and gave it a push.

There was a crash; then silence. Joseph listened for a few moments, then put down the window quietly and retired once more to his couch, chuckling as he did so.

There was no more music that night, and on the following Sunday Haydn's flute was not heard at the Brooktown chapel. He had accidentally broken it, he explained. He also wore a piece of plaster on one of his hands.

On both Friday and Saturday Ruthanna met Cecil on the heath, and he fed her poor little unsuspecting soul with loving words and caresses. And on both occasions John Ford passed them like a shadow, and they saw him not.

CHAPTER XI.

"I MUN THINK OF THEE TILL I DIE."

THE Sunday which followed was perhaps the happiest day of Ruthanna's life. Her new clothes were not ready, which had caused her a moment's regret as she put on her ordinary Sunday dress. Only last Sunday she had considered this dress perfection. Now all was changed, and next Sunday she would appear as a lady.

And even at the moment when she was regarding herself in her cracked mirror, Cecil in his Oriental dressing-gown was seated near his chamber window with a volume of Lamartine in his hand. It contained "Graziella" and "Jocelyn" bound together. He was reading part of the poem at the end of "Graziella." Somehow, Ruthanna reminded him of this simple Italian girl.

He laid the book on his knee. "If I stay here much longer," he mused, "I might be fool enough to think of marrying that little Ruthanna!"

"Cecil," called Mr. Lane from the bottom of the staircase, "are you coming down? I must go soon. I have to preach at Stafford to-day, you know."

Cecil was down in the breakfast-room a few moments after this, and he could not but observe that his uncle wanted to unburden his mind of something.

"I was wondering," began the minister, uncomfortably, "if you would care to go with me to-day. You were gone to your room when I returned last night, or I should have asked you then."

"If you really don't mind, uncle," Cecil began, apologetically, "I think I would prefer remaining with my aunt. Fortunately, I have had opportunities of hearing you preach; and my aunt——"

"Pray, Cecil, do not let consideration for me influence your decision," said Mrs. Lane, smiling. "I have not had a great deal of your society. You know you are almost always out: so I should not miss that to which I have never been accustomed."

Cecil was about to protest, but Mr. Lane waved his hand pastorally as if to request silence, and said, "I want to give a word in your ear, Cecil. Don't be offended,—but in the Black Country girls are married

very early. Those you would regard as children are thought to be marriageable here: so if you chanced to notice one more than another of our village maidens, things might be thought. Of course it is very absurd; but, to be really plain with you, Beethoven Blackhouse told me one or two people have been remarking on your being seen with Ruthanna Trent. She's a nice little girl, and of course it is natural enough to speak to her, and—and—all that; I can't explain myself very well, but you will understand, Cecil?"

The minister moved uneasily, and cast furtive glances at his nephew.

Cecil said nothing; but he chewed his moustache, and looked sufficiently annoyed.

Here Mrs. Lane intervened. She was not afraid of Cecil. Moreover, she did not altogether like him, which was perhaps natural enough, considering that she had been treated as a sort of outcast by his family for years. And Cecil himself, though uniformly polite, had shown no particular affection towards herself, and (most important) he had ignored the baby.

"Do you find the comments of these rustics amusing, Cecil?" she asked.

"No, aunt," replied the young man, a little abruptly. "I find them insolent, and irritating."

There are people who would walk through fire to their own desires. This is not bravery so much as blind impulse and self-will. Cecil was one of this class; at least he was occasionally. Few of us are consistent even in our wrong-doing. Mr. Lane's warning, though it angered his nephew, did not in any way alter his plans. He was to meet Ruthanna that afternoon at the Berridge Lakes. He would, of course, keep his appointment. Ruthanna ought at that time to be at the Sunday-school, which was held in the little old chapel. But this did not trouble Cecil. She had promised to meet him; that was all he cared about.

This particular Sunday was, as to weather, perfect. The sun shone gloriously. The sky was blue. The gorse and heather seemed of a more wonderful color than ever, and such of the bracken as had donned its winter yellow added a new beauty to its younger comrades by force of contrast,—just as the dear grandfather or grandmother seated in the high-backed chair heightens the effect of the light-hearted young lives that fill the apartment with an atmosphere of spring. Alas when the beloved white head is no longer there, and the dear smile no longer greets us! for surely with their departure the spring itself seems to have taken flight for many of us.

Cecil Calverley had to awake one day to the fact that that quiet kindly old student among his books at "Heatherdene" had been, after all, the light of the home. But then it was too late to give the old man that sympathy which all along he had craved! It is not safe to imagine that what is never asked for is never wished for.

On this Sunday afternoon, as Cecil walked along the road towards Berridge, he was surprised to find himself thinking of his father. He scarcely ever thought of him unless some tradesman was pressing him

for payment of a debt. He laughed to himself as he recalled the white-haired, dignified scholar, with his books about him, and some wretched dog he had rescued lying at his feet, while his thin, sensitive hand caressed it. What a queer hobby it was of his, this of rescuing dumb animals! Cecil couldn't now remember how many old horses and donkeys his father had purchased out of slavery to give them an opportunity of ending their days peacefully in sweet meadows and cosey stables of his providing. And how all these animals loved him! It really was funny! "Fancy my father ever having been young!" laughed Cecil, "and fancy his ever going to meet a little girl as I am doing to-day!" It seemed too absurd a thing even to be thought of.

Yet the old student had had his romance too. His heart had beat fast at the approach of one fair vision of girlhood. His manly frame had known what it was to tremble at the sound of a tender woman's voice. He had dreamed of a Paradise where one lovely woman had been queen of all, of himself most of all. And yet she was his, yielding her sweet self to his wishes.

And he had awoke from his dream, the husband of the woman he had dreamed of; and he had known then that he had only dreamed, only created the object of his adoration. She did not exist.

So he accepted his fate with a resignation which had infinite pathos in it. He did not reproach his wife for not being all he had thought her. He had been mistaken, that was all. But out of his bitter disappointment there arose in his large unsatisfied heart an infinite tenderness towards the wounded and helpless. So this kindness to animals was not quite a "hobby," as Cecil supposed. The old scholar must lavish his tenderness on something; and no one but these poor dumb beasts seemed to care to have it.

So young Cecil thought indulgently of his father as "rather a good sort of old fellow."

Cecil had not very long to wait for Ruthanna. He was seated on the bank near the larger lake when she approached him, flushed and smiling. He rose at once, and took her in his arms.

"My little love," he said, softly, holding up her sweet face with one of his hands that he might gaze at it, "shall you think of me sometimes when I am gone?"

She did not quite realize his meaning. "I mun think of thee till I die," she answered, in a low voice.

Cecil winced at these words. Somehow, though he knew himself to be enslaved now, he was not at all sure that he wanted her to think of him as long as that. *Yet would he like her to forget him?* Oh, that soft, palpitating little form! no other could be quite like it. One thing Cecil did know: for the moment he wished to pluck the flower of this girl's love. After that, any one might have the stalk and the few drooping leaves for him.

There is a story most of us have read in our nursery days about the cat and the mouse who were joint possessors of a pot of lard, which was to serve them for a winter store, and was hidden in a church, of all places in the world. We remember how the cat secretly first licked the top off the lard, then ate half, and finally cleared off the lot: so

that when the honest mouse at last came for her share there was nothing remaining but the jar.

This is but an example of how some men behave about girls. They possess no right over the particular girl, but they win her admiration, then her love, and finally herself,—which does not mean that they marry her. Then, when the honest lover comes along, there is only the empty jar! This would not so much matter, perhaps, if the girl, like the jar, had no feeling. But, depend on it, the mouse cannot be in partnership with the cat without coming off second-best. Do not let it be inferred from the foregoing that Cecil Calverley contemplated the ruin of this poor little maiden. He did not. There is honor among thieves, so they say; and though Cecil had not been, and was not likely to be, as saintly as "that good young man who died" in the song, he certainly did respect and honor virtue in a woman, and would not for a moment have yielded to a desire to lead her from the straight path.

But if a woman's soul is gone out to a man, the jar is empty all the same, though the fair fame of the woman be unsullied.

So, while the afternoon sun cast golden quivering darts across the lakes, breaking up the shadows of trees which lay there, Cecil sat with his arm about Ruthanna, and both were perfectly happy. All was peace and rest, and no thought of past or future, or of any universe outside their love, obtruded itself upon them. What they spoke of is of no consequence. Probably it was commonplace enough. But what commonplace either of word or look does not love glorify? At last that afternoon ended, and it was necessary to part once more.

It was at this moment that Cecil made a proposal to Ruthanna which he would not have made to a lady. He told her of his uncle's remarks in the morning, and said he must not be seen with her as he had been. She could trust him, could she not? she loved him well enough, did she not, to run a little risk to see him?

Ruthanna waited and was silent. She did not understand.

"Your people go to bed absurdly early," went on Cecil. "I always take a walk after supper. Could you not manage to come out without your people hearing you, and join me in my walk? No one would know of it, and you know, my little angel, you have nothing to fear from me."

She was still silent.

"Of course," he began, in a lighter tone, "you must do what you think best; only we can't see each other. But perhaps it does not make much difference to you whether we see each other or not."

"Oh, but it does! it does!" cried the poor child, weeping.

"Then you will trust yourself to me?" inquired Cecil.

"I canner think! I canner think!" said Ruthanna, pressing her hands on her temples.

"You are not afraid of me, Ruthanna?" said Cecil, reproachfully.

"No, I am not afraid of thee," Ruthanna answered, doubtfully.

"But if you will not come, that shows that you are afraid," rejoined Cecil, resolutely.

A sudden thought came to Ruthanna. "Mr. Calverley," she began, "thee'rt not ashamed to be with me?—it isn't that?"

"Ashamed of you, Ruthanna! A prince of the blood needn't be that; only you are very young, and it is a pity to set people talking."

This set her heart at rest for the moment, and she said, "Where mun I meet thee?"

"I will be outside waiting: you have only to come out quietly and join me."

"It seems very wrong," said the girl, doubtfully.

"Then don't come," said Cecil, decidedly; but of course he knew what would be the result of his words. "We had best say good-by, then."

"No! no! no!" cried the girl. "I will come,—I will come."

"Then, dear little Ruthanna," said Cecil, taking her in his arms, "good-by only till to-morrow night." And, again kissing her, he went his way, and she hers.

Now, as a matter of fact, Cecil did not care a straw about people talking about him, but he did think it would gratify his poetic passion much more to meet this girl in the starlight than in the garish day; and he had never been accustomed to consider any one before himself. It would be most interesting to see this girl come to him "when all the world was sleeping," as the serenades all have it, with a sublime forgetfulness of the fact that (to speak roughly) about half the world is composed of wakeful lovers!

But what would Victoria think of all this? This uncomfortable thought would obtrude itself as Cecil went back to the manse. Why should it matter to him at all what Victoria might think? Yet it did matter.

Cecil went with his aunt to the chapel in the evening. Mr. Honeyman, the circuit steward, who was also a lay preacher, was occupying the pulpit. Cecil heard not a word of the sermon. He was absorbed with his own thoughts, and with furtive glances towards the singing-pew, where Ruthanna sat decked in her faded blue feather.

After the service there was a prayer-meeting, and Cecil remained with his aunt. After the prayer-meeting Mr. Honeyman came and spoke to him. A young man who had put a sovereign into the collecting-plate ought to be made much of. Mr. Trent came up also to shake hands with the young collegian, and overheard Mr. Honeyman saying, "If I did not ask you to engage in prayer, Mr. Calverley, it was only that I was not sure if it would be agreeable to you."

Cecil was about to observe that it would have been particularly disagreeable to him, but, noting Mr. Trent's close vicinity, he merely bowed and said he quite understood. Mrs. Lane, who heard this, quite understood too; and this incident did not tend to raise her nephew in her estimation.

But as to Cecil, he was sublimely oblivious of all this, and went to bed that night quite happy. And, placing Ruthanna's bright golden curl on the pillow beside him, he dreamed.

CHAPTER XII.

SOME NIGHT ADVENTURES.

THERE was a second post at Handswick : that is, the letters came as far as the post-office, and any one could get letters by calling for them after half-past one.

On Monday afternoon Cecil strolled up the green towards the post-office, and, being there, looked in at Wigham's. He found that tall and thin tradesman and small postal official behind the counter, with his habitual fixed smile upon his face. The poor man tried to increase it a little in honor of Mr. Calverley, but failed on account of the position of his ears.

While searching among the letters for any for the manse, he observed, blandly,—

"I hear, sir, as you're going to lecture to-night at the Young Men's Improvement Society. I edits the local paper here, which you may have seen. It comes out on Saturdays, price one halfpenny. If you will favor me with a few perfunctory remarks, or lend me your manuscript, I will write a article for next issue."

Here Mr. Wigham made another abortive effort to increase his smile.

"But I have no manuscript," laughed Cecil, "and I don't yet know what I shall say. Moreover, I don't wish such an article to be written—I mean," Cecil corrected himself, seeing the smile diminish about one-half, "really it isn't worth your while to write it."

The smile returned. "It wouldn't be no trouble," Mr. Wigham broke in hastily. "Me and young Honeyman could do it up together ; and if you haven't the manuscript, why, Weber Blackhouse knows short-hand,—at least he can write it : he can't always read what he has wrote, however ; but, if he does what he can, me and Honeyman can make up the missed bits." (We may remark that young Honeyman and Wigham were usually at daggers drawn : they did, however, occasionally combine in editing the *Handswick Observer*.)

The prospect of having his lecture thus reported rather alarmed the undergraduate. He, however, did not say more, but decided to speak to his uncle and get it prevented. This precaution he afterwards forgot, with results to be revealed on the following Saturday.

"There is a letter for you, sir," said Mr. Wigham, handing the same to the young man. It was another from Victoria, and had the Paris post-mark on it. Cecil put it in his pocket, and forgot it till late that night.

He did not finally decide on his subject for the lecture till just before tea, when he took down Darwin's "Origin of Species" from his uncle's study-shelves.

"Happy thought!" he cried. "I've got a few ideas on this subject, thanks to knowing young Hobson, who is working with Michael Foster at Cambridge, and I did once glance through the book ; and for the rest I can trust to my power of eloquence, which has carried the day at the Union more than once. Besides, I at least know as

much about evolution as my uncle does about solar physics. I suppose he got all his stuff out of Lockyer in an hour or two."

When Cecil mentioned his intention to his uncle, the latter seemed doubtful. "You see, Cecil," he began, deprecatingly, "John Ford has been studying Darwin a good deal, and is himself thinking of reading a paper upon it." "The more reason," thought Cecil, "to deal with the subject and take it out of John Ford. No one equals a working-man who knows a little, in conceit."

"And, furthermore," went on the minister, "I know they are expecting something mathematical,—your own subject, you know, Cecil."

Nevertheless Cecil stuck to his point. He was, in truth, not disposed to follow his uncle's wishes too minutely since the reverend gentleman had made those few remarks on the Sunday morning.

Cecil did not shine on this evening. But, as we purpose giving the brief account which duly appeared in the *Handswick Observer*, we say no more at this point.

It was after all the household at the manse were in bed, except the minister, who usually sat up very late reading in his little study, that Cecil put on his hat to take a stroll. The manse doors were never locked at night; why should they be? there was nothing to steal. But, for that matter, few people at Handswick ever dreamed of locking a door, except in strike-time.

Well, then, the doors being unlocked, it was easy for him to return at any time. The same thing applied to Ruthanna. However, Cecil Calverley was not to meet Ruthanna that night, as the sequel to this chapter will show.

Our young collegian was not in the best spirits as he strode out and lighted a cigar. For one thing, the good minister had mildly observed during supper that if his dear nephew had followed his advice and taken some mathematical subject the result of the lecture might not have been so unsatisfactory. Moreover, Cecil had the unpleasant consciousness that he had got a little mixed in his deductions, and that John Ford and one or two other precocious rustics had said things which were much to the point and not in favor of the somewhat uncertain line he had taken. It was clear that a number of these men knew something of the subject. It would be refreshing to see little blue-eyed Ruthanna after all this.

Cecil had not progressed far down the Birmingham road before he observed another figure moving leisurely enough in the same direction. In the starlight it was easy to note that the figure was not that of a working-man. It was not unlike Cecil's own in this light. This other one was also smoking a cigar. The two moved on, on different sides of the road, until the Trents' house was reached. Then the stranger stood still by the hedge which surrounded the garden of the iron-worker, and smoked. Cecil walked past for some distance, and on returning found this man still stationed there. He walked in the other direction for about the same distance, then walked back. The man was still there.

Then Cecil found a convenient bush on the other side a little way

off, under which he stationed himself to watch. The stranger still stood under the shadow of the hedge and smoked.

He meant to see what this fellow wanted. His plans were frustrated, however; for near where he stood there was a stile which led across the fields to the iron-works. Over this stile a young man climbed; and he instantly recognized Mr. Calverley.

"Good-evening, sir," said the new-comer. "It's a nice night."

"Very," said Cecil, shortly, wondering, to use the words he thought in, who the deuce this fellow was.

"I'm come out to compose," said the intruder.

"Your nerves?" inquired Cecil, in a tone the reverse of cordial.

"No, sir: an obligato for the flute to a song called 'Thy voice is near.'"

"Oh, indeed?" said Cecil, without the smallest show of interest.

"This spot inspires me," went on the composer, "as none other can. You don't play the flute, sir?"

"No, thank—" Cecil broke off, and said, in the simplest English, "No, I don't."

"Ah," sighed the other, "then you don't know my feelings."

"If you knew mine," thought Cecil, angrily, "you would make the best of your time in putting a little more distance between us."

Cecil felt he couldn't talk to this fellow any longer: so he walked away. He did not return for half an hour. Then the man was gone from the garden hedge. The composer was gone from the stile. All was still. Ruthanna did not appear. Finally Cecil went back to the manse.

But something had happened during that half-hour of Cecil's absence.

The gentleman who was smoking under the hedge was no other than Mr. Honeyman, junior. He had not come with any motive whatever,—at least any conscious motive. But the reason for his standing by that particular garden hedge may have been that he was thinking speculatively about the pretty girl who lived there.

It was during this half-hour of Cecil's absence, then, that a great surprise came to Mr. Honeyman. He saw the garden gate open, and Ruthanna herself peep timidly out. The next moment she had flung herself uninvited into his arms. He was too utterly astonished to say a word. But his instincts prompted him to accept at once the proffered gift,—for the hour, at any rate: so he folded her in his arms with her face against his side, where his heart was beating fast enough. Still he did not speak. He was trying to unravel his sensations. He rather liked the experience, but he did *not* like this unmaidenly act of Ruthanna's in coming unasked. He could scarcely make out whether he was most pleased or vexed.

"Wunner thee speak, Mr. Calverley?" Ruthanna said.

"By Jove!" thought Honeyman, "so that is the little game, is it?" He felt as if a thunder-bolt had fallen. She should make a small payment for her mistake, however. And he bent down and kissed her.

This act revealed to the poor girl her error. Honeyman's kisses

were so unlike Cecil's. With a cry of dismay she fled back into the house.

Young Honeyman found the whole affair infinitely amusing. "I've spoilt the sport for this night, at any rate," he laughed, as he walked away.

He stopped laughing a moment after. He had had another surprise, and one not altogether so amusing as the last. A large stone had been flung at him by some one, and it had sent his hat flying off into a dike on the other side of the road. This stone was followed by another, which struck the unfortunate chemist in the back.

"Look here!" he roared, striding angrily towards the spot from which the missiles appeared to come, and dodging another as he did so. "You're a d——d coward, Mr. Calverley! Why don't you come out and face me like a man?"

There was no reply; and young Honeyman ran hither and thither, searching for his ambushed foe, swearing himself hoarse all the time. Whoever had thrown those stones had disappeared. At last the young man gave up the search for his foe, and looked for his hat. He found it more by chance than by anything else, and, savagely cramming it on to his head, felt several cooling streams of muddy water meandering down his face and neck and creeping inside his collar. Honeyman cared nothing at all about this, however, he was in such a towering passion. Resolving to see Mr. Calverley on the morrow,—for he was certain the collegian must have been his assailant,—Honeyman went home, quite ignorant that Haydn Blackhouse had been the real offender.

In the mean time, Ruthanna was crying in her garret, with the stars looking down at her through the skylight.

Cecil was in his room too, now. He was annoyed to have missed his walk with Ruthanna; but if she were disappointed it could only make her more eager, he thought. Then he remembered Victoria's letter and took it out and read it. It appeared she had not been getting on with her aunt, and was returning to Heatherdene at once.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN FORD'S APPEAL.

WHY the people stared so markedly at him in the chapel, the following Sunday morning, Cecil couldn't imagine. They appeared to be amused at something, too.

If the young collegian had seen the *Handswick Observer* for the night before, he might have received some enlightenment. He did see it that day, however, and forthwith decided that he had seen as much as he wanted of rustic life.

If the people stared, Cecil did so likewise, but for a very different reason. They were looking at him to see how he took the report of his lecture. He was gazing at a girl, decked in fashionable attire, that should have been Ruthanna.

The broad-brimmed hat sat jauntily on the curly little head, the blue velvet dress and jacket fitted her pretty figure like a glove. She looked altogether bewitching, yet her new appearance seemed to strike pain to Cecil's heart. The simple village maid was gone; there remained only an imitation of a fine lady. Yet he had thought on first seeing her how he would like to dress her in fine clothes and see how she looked.

She looked conscious. Her color was unnaturally bright. She was less graceful. Cecil felt it was like an awakening. He had not seen Ruthanna all the week, for she had not come out in the day, and at night after her unlucky experience she had been afraid to do so.

He took an envelope from his pocket and scribbled upon it, "If you do not meet me to-night, you may never see me again. I shall be outside, as I have been every night." He would go round to the vestry, and slip it into her hand as she came down from the singing-gallery.

The service over (and it seemed a very long one), Cecil carried out his plan. He did not speak to Ruthanna, but just slipped the scrap of paper into her hand. She blushed and glanced inquiringly at him. How lovely she looked! Her dress revealed every sweet turn of her figure. Her soft complexion and short golden curls harmonized exquisitely with the blue velvet. Yet Cecil looked with no approval at this change. If he had loved her, it was just because she was a simple maiden in homely clothes. Now she was got up like a beautiful doll, —yes, beautiful, but a doll. He therefore looked coldly at her when he gave her the note.

Ruthanna was quick to note the change in his manner, and the ready tears filled her eyes.

It was such a bitter disappointment, for she had been so sure he would like her appearance. And then added to this there was the remembrance that for days that seemed an eternity she had not seen him.

But she had to go away with her companions, and wait till she reached her garret to read the note Cecil had given her.

When she read it, she was seated on her bed, with her finery, which she had removed, beside her. She read it several times before she seemed able to take in its meaning. His look, too, haunted her so oppressively. He was angry with her. He must be angry, because she had not come out all the week. If he did but know what had happened to her on the first night she had tried to meet him, he would understand then. And what could he mean by talking of never seeing her any more? If he were ever so angry, he couldn't, couldn't stay away from her forever. He loved her, she was sure, and if he loved her he would come to her, come to fetch her and make her his wife some day.

Poor child! she judged Cecil's love by her own. She loved him as only simple natures can love, and she knew that she should love him forever.

As for Cecil, he was in anything but a good humor when he got to the manse after the service. For one thing, he had ascertained that

the notice of his address had appeared in the *Handswick Observer*, and that his uncle had tried to prevent his seeing it.

Another thing occurred, too, which annoyed him not a little. That young Honeyman had come up and spoken to him on his way from chapel, and had asked him how his "little affair" was going on.

Honeyman had taken this liberty, whenever he saw Cecil, after he had had an explanation with him about the stone-throwing on the Monday night.

Being convinced that Mr. Calverley was not his assailant, he thought fit to rally him on his assignation, in a friendly way. Moreover, it was he who gave him a copy of the paper referred to. Cecil read it when he reached the manse, and was so disgusted that he resolved to go back to Heatherdene the very next day.

If the reader cares to see the report, here it is :

"MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.—Our young men of intellect and self-educated in their attainments were favored with a treat on Monday night, when Mr. Calverley, the Rev. Mr. Lane's nephew, and a Fellow of Cambridge College, gave an address, we can scarcely call it a lecture, on the 'Origin of the Species.' We are sorry we cannot give all his remarks, as the honorable young gentleman did not write it, but he will doubtless do so another time, and years will add lustre to his brow. He said that Professor Darwin had made a grand discovery, that men were once jelly-fishes,—that is, very little specks of jelly that eat everything they can lay hands on. He did not altogether hold with Darwin, but he seemed to think that there was something in it, for in a chicken's egg you could see there was first a jelly-fish, and then a real fish, and then a young newt, and then a bird, and so it might have happened the same with the human species. A very lively discussion followed, which Mr. John Ford began by mentioning that he didn't think Mr. Calverley had done justice to Dr. Darwin, who did not say that men had once been jelly-fishes, and that he had looked into many eggs before they were hatched, and had never seen any jelly-fish nor frog there, though what he did see was most curious, and he told the meeting about it. But would any one produce a sort of man that was only just above a monkey? (That is what we should like to see very much.—Eds.) But Mr. Calverley did not make much reply, and so we think he is not quite sure about the species question."

This report, Ruthanna's new dress, the minister's politeness, his aunt's amused tolerance of him,—all this irritated the young collegian beyond words. He would end it all by going home. Victoria would be back, too. He had had quite enough of the Black Country.

But, even as he mused thus angrily, Ruthanna's sweet eyes seemed to be looking at him with silent reproach.

"I will make her happy this one night," thought the young man. "She loves me, poor little thing! It's a pity, perhaps; but she will soon console herself with that John Ford. Confound him! how he did take it out of me at that discussion!"

Cecil was in his bedroom, and the window overlooked the road. He was looking out, when he saw John Ford himself. Really he

seemed to be coming to call. What a time to come! Dinner would be served almost immediately.

Presently there was a knock at Cecil's door:

"Please, sir, Mr. Ford wants to know if you will see him. He won't keep you a minute."

"All right. What room is he in?" Cecil called out.

"No room as yet, sir: he's standing on the mat. I'll take him in the drawing-room."

When Mr. Calverley came down, he was wearing his wonderful purple coat. He looked a sharp contrast to John Ford, who was dressed in a plain black suit. His manner was painfully nervous. Cecil was all well-bred composure.

"I hope, sir," began John Ford, speaking ordinary English, and dropping his dialect, "that you won't think I have taken a liberty in calling to see you?"

"Not at all," said Cecil, laughing coldly. He was leaning with one elbow on the chimney-piece, and looking steadily at his visitor with his violet-colored eyes.

John Ford stood before him, awkwardly turning his hat round and round in his hard, rough hands. His hair seemed redder than ever, his freckles more pronounced, by reason of his great paleness.

"I saw the *Observer*, sir, with the report in it, and I wanted to tell you I am sorry I spoke at all. Yes, I am very sorry."

"You needn't be," said Cecil, icily. "You cannot suppose that it matters to me what a lot of—well, what people who don't know me, think?"

"I was afraid, sir," said John Ford, faltering, "that it might annoy you and prevent you from coming back here any more. Oh, sir, don't let it do that! don't let anything do that!"

"What the deuce is the fellow driving at?" thought Cecil; but he laughed, and said,—

"You want to air a little more of your knowledge at my expense on some future occasion, I suppose, Mr. Ford. I may possibly give you an opportunity; but it is not likely—I mean, I don't think it probable that I shall come here again."

John Ford turned whiter than ever.

"Don't say that, sir!" he almost gasped. "You must come back, sir! indeed you must!"

Cecil laughed outright. This John Ford must be out of his senses. What could it matter to him whether he, Cecil, came back or not? It would be for this man's benefit that the young collegian should not come back, one would think.

"Really, Mr. Ford," Cecil said, "one would think it would break your heart not to see me again, to hear you talk."

"There are other hearts that might get broken if you didn't come back, sir," said John Ford.

Cecil could not but understand him now, and he felt humbled, and, in spite of himself, owned this young working-man his superior.

So well the poor fellow loved this girl, then, that he had come to his rival to plead with him not to forsake her!

Yes, that was what John Ford had come about. But it was not so much that the notice in the paper had alarmed him, as that he had a general fear lest Mr. Calverley was only playing with the girl.

Cecil was spared the pain of replying to this, for the minister entered, and John Ford took his leave.

Cecil felt decidedly more uncomfortable after this interview, and wished himself well out of Handswick. He almost wished he had never come. Yet he felt he could not wish never to have known Ruthanna. But it was all nonsense about "breaking hearts." That happened only in books. Ruthanna could marry honest John a little later, and then if ever he did come back he would probably see her with half a dozen little Fords round her.

So Cecil tried to pass it off. But in his heart he felt it would be hard to part with Ruthanna to-night. He felt, too, that she was not likely soon to forget him.

In the mean time, John Ford had hurried off to the Trents' house. He must see Ruthanna and warn her.

The Trent family were at dinner when he arrived: so he was asked to join them. The iron-worker was not cordial, however; but of course he had young Honeyman in his mind.

John remained, and tried to eat, but somehow he constantly forgot, and laid down his knife and fork. Abraham noted this uneasily.

"Come, John," he said from time to time, "dunner forget thy food."

After dinner, when Ruthanna, was helping to clear the table, John managed to say, "Come into the garden when I go, Ruthanna. I've something I must tell thee."

Later Ruthanna joined him in the garden, out of sight of the windows.

"Hast thee set thy heart on Mr. Calverley, Ruthanna?" he began, point-blank.

"It is none of thy business!" cried Ruthanna, angrily. Then she left him and went into the house.

John Ford sighed deeply and went slowly out of the gate. Oh, he could not stem this torrent the sound of which he could hear! It is hard to be helpless when a vague and terrible evil threatens.

CHAPTER XIV.

CECIL SAYS GOOD-BY TO RUTHANNA.

THE rain fell steadily as Cecil found his way to the Trents' house that night. But he knew Ruthanna would come to him; and he was not disappointed. He had been waiting near the little gate only a few minutes when she came timidly out. She was wearing an old-fashioned gray water-proof with a hood which drew up in a sort of frill round her little face. Her hand trembled almost painfully as he took it. He stooped and kissed her on the lips. They trembled too. Cecil tucked her little hand under his arm, and, holding his umbrella over

her, led her rapidly away towards the common. There was a shelter there he knew of,—not a very grand one, but still a shelter. It was a sort of hut constructed of a trellis of tree-branches, and was thatched with dry heather, which also filled up the holes in the sides. It had been put up for the horses which pastured on the common to go into when they liked. They would probably like to-night, since it rained, but Cecil meant to drive them off. In one corner he knew there was a heap of sweet-smelling hay that could afford the lovers a seat. There they could have their talk, out of the rain.

Neither of them spoke much as they crossed the common to the spot where the hut stood. Ruthanna explained why she had not come out on any of the previous nights; that was all. Cecil was in a tumult. Now that he must tell her that he was going away, a sudden passionate desire to remain took possession of him. This was why he spoke so little. Ruthanna said nothing for very joy at being with him. Her happiness bewildered her, intoxicated her. It made her dumb. He pressed her little hand, which lay on his arm, against his side from time to time, and she could feel his heart beating in great thumps.

There was no door to the hut, so the rain was driven in a little, but the corner with the hay in it was dry. Cecil entered first. There were no horses inside. Then Ruthanna came in, and Cecil seated her beside him on the hay. She was trembling so much that he removed her water-proof and wrapped her in his warmer coat and held her to his breast to warm her. "Ruthanna, my little one," he said, tenderly, "you do not know how I love you!" As he spoke he noticed that she was crying. "Why do you cry, little one?" he said, kissing away the tears. "This is our last night. Let us be happy this once."

"The last night, Mr. Calverley! Oh, dunner say it! dunner say it! Tak me with thee, if thee mun go! Oh, tak me with thee!" And she threw her arms round his neck and clung there, laying her wet cheek against his. Cecil tightened his arm about her, and felt his pulses on fire.

At that moment, one of the horses put his head in at the door, and it was necessary to drive him away. Once outside the hut, Cecil came to himself. "Good God!" he said to himself, "what was I about to do?" He stood in the door-way a few moments, his whole being vibrating. "Ruthanna," he presently said, "it is very late; perhaps we had best go back."

"Need us yet, Mr. Calverley?" she answered, in a choking voice. Poor child! what should she know of his struggle with himself?

"Yes, I think so," said Cecil. His voice had a strange ring in it as he spoke. It had stopped raining, and the stars came out. By their dim light Cecil saw the girl on her knees, her face in her hands. "Ruthanna," he said, huskily, "say a prayer. Thank God,—never mind for what,—but thank Him."

But she did not heed his words; she was crying to herself and rocking her form to and fro. Cecil longed to comfort her, but he would not enter the hut again. "Come to me, Ruthanna," he said, gently. She came obediently as a faithful dog might have done, and stood trembling beside him. He took her hands in his, and looked

down at her. "Try and forgive me!" he said, brokenly. "I have been a villain to you, to have won your love. But you must forget me, Ruthanna. It is best for you, and you will soon be happy, and it will all be as if it had never happened. I never thought of it coming to this. It was my selfishness."

"Mr. Calverley," said Ruthanna, with tears in her voice, "thee dunner mean as thee never *meant* to marry me?"

Cecil bowed his head.

"Then it mun indeed be good-by," she said, in a strange, far-away voice.

His impulse was to take her to his heart and swear that nothing should part them. But the thought of his family, and it may be his own vanity, deterred him.

"Forget me as soon as you can, Ruthanna," he said, rapidly. "I am not worth a thought from your pure little heart. If I married you, it would be to make you wretched. It would be like caging a beautiful swallow. You would pine away among my people. You don't know what my mother and sister are like. You could never understand them, and they could never understand you. They would break your heart among them."

Ruthanna smiled a curious smile in the starlight. It was bitter, it was sad beyond words. But she did not speak. She had withdrawn her hands from him, and was standing apart, clasping her fingers lightly together.

Cecil went on: "You will soon get over this. Indeed, I am doing the best thing for you in going. Do you remember that first day when I read to you among the bracken? Oh, Ruthanna, I shall be thinking of it when you have forgotten it and are happy with John Ford." Ruthanna smiled that curious smile again, but said no word. "If we had married, then we should have ceased to love each other, as Herrick says,—I read it to you that day,—'Love in extremes can never long endure.'"

"Have thee any more to tell me, Mr. Calverley?" Ruthanna asked; "for I think thee have said enough, and I mun go." Her voice was very calm, but her face was awfully white in the starlight.

"Of course I shall take you home," said Cecil.

"No, no," she answered, shaking her head slowly; "thee will part with me here,—now."

Cecil pleaded, but in vain. She would not go a step with him.

"At least say you forgive me!" cried Cecil. "I don't deserve it, but at least say you forgive me!"

Again that strange smile. "I canner say it now," she said. "When I *can*, I will let thee hear it."

"But to-morrow I go," said Cecil: "you must tell me now or never, you see."

"When I can say it, thee shalt hear it," she repeated. Then she returned to the hut and got her cloak. He would have fastened it for her, but she would not allow him. Another moment, and she was flying rather than walking across the heather. As she went she called back once, "Good-by, Mr. Calverley,—forever!" Then he heard a

little hysterical laugh burst from her, sounding more sad than a cry. He had half a mind to follow her; but it was better to end it now.

As he walked towards the manse he felt intolerably wretched and guilty, but finally consoled himself with the thought that, after all, such a child as she was must forget soon.

Then, oddly enough, Victoria's prediction that he would do something extraordinary came to him. If she knew of this affair, he thought, how she would despise him! Well, she never would know,—that was one comfort.

But there Cecil was mistaken.

CHAPTER XV.

CECIL LEARNS SOME NEW THINGS.

On the evening of Cecil's arrival home two friends had dropped in to dinner at Heatherdene,—Mr. Fairbank and Mr. Morrison. Cecil had only time to slip into his evening suit before the gong sounded. In fact, the rest of the family were already assembled in the dining-room when he put in an appearance.

A chair was left vacant for him, however, next to Victoria, at his mother's end of the table. He spoke to his father first, being nearest the door, then went the round of the table, shaking hands with each, and kissing his mother and sister. His mother's face wore an uneasy look, as she scrutinized his face. Victoria, too, looked at him curiously. His face was pale, and his manner had a shade of restraint in it. He made many abortive attempts to appear animated, however,—and over-did it, as most people do under the circumstances. Forced gayety often reveals a sad heart.

Even Mr. Fairbank noticed something unnatural about Cecil's behavior, taken up though he was with Violet. When the ladies had retired and the men were left alone,—*i.e.*, the artist, the clergyman, and Cecil (Mr. Calverley had escaped to his library),—Mr. Fairbank rallied the young man on his "girl-I-left-behind-me" expression of countenance. It was positive pain to Cecil. During all the dinner he had had before him that homely kitchen with the green walls and the blue window-blind. Oh, poor little Ruthanna! where was she now? poor little eyes, were they red with weeping? He could have cursed himself.

But he replied to the clergyman's comment with a light laugh, and poured himself out some brandy. Cecil didn't usually drink spirits, as his friends well knew: there was no poetry in spirits. And at this sign Mr. Fairbank dropped his tone of raillery and lit a cigar. Cecil, too, smoked violently, and laughed immoderately at Mr. Morrison's jokes, which quite delighted that gentleman, who, though an artist of real merit and a good musician, was decidedly not a good joker: yet he would try to joke in spite of much discouragement. Indeed, his perseverance in this line deserved a better reward, one would think.

What with these jokes, Cecil's strange hilarity, and an attraction in the drawing-room, it was not to be wondered at that Mr. Fairbank

soon proposed to join the ladies. Mr. Morrison was nothing loath. Victoria was decidedly better fun than these two men. He had brought his violin, too, and wanted some music. Victoria was at the piano when they entered the yellow drawing-room, and the artist immediately joined her. The clergyman, having secured some coffee for Miss Calverley and himself, from a tray a servant brought in, retired to a window-seat to chat with his fair "curate." Cecil joined his mother, who was seated in her accustomed corner by the fire.

"Well, Cecil," began the mother, "do you regret your experiment?"

"No, and yes," he answered, with a smile that died in a moment. Oh, if he could get the sound of that wild little laugh out of his ears! Oh, if he could shut out forever the vision of that little figure flying from him through the heather under the starlight!

"Why no *and* yes?" inquired Mrs. Calverley.

"It is difficult to explain," said Cecil.

"Your aunt was kind?"

"Oh, yes."

"Did she seem happy, Cecil?"

"Oh, certainly."

"She made a great mistake, Cecil."

"Oh," cried Cecil, impatiently, "she is not alone in that if she did. We all make mistakes, I rather think. I beg your pardon, mother," he added, seeing her look hurt at his tone.

"You are not well, Cecil," said Mrs. Calverley, anxiously.

"No, I don't think I am, mother. Will you excuse me to the others if I slip out? I must have some air. But, for the matter of that, I don't think they would miss me. I should probably be back before they knew I had gone."

"Go, my boy," said the mother. She longed to question him, but saw she must not.

Cecil passed out through the conservatory on which the little blue drawing-room opened, and found himself in the Shakespeare garden. The large evening primroses were open now, to invite the night-moths. There was a slight movement of the air, which enveloped him in soft sounds and sweet scents. He stood still under the starlight, and thought, near where the tall sunflowers drooped their heads, heavy with seeds, till they touched the red dahlias and the white lilies with their crumpled yellow fringes. He abstractedly watched the moths go from flower to flower: then some lines from Victor Hugo's poem "*Le Papillon et la Fleur*" came to his mind,—how the flower begged the butterfly to take root beside it, or give it (the flower) wings. "You can come and go," says the flower, who loves the butterfly, "but I—I must remain and see my shadow turn at my feet."

Ah! he, Cecil, could go, but poor little Ruthanna must remain and see her shadow turn at her feet!

"Yet," he pondered, "to marry her would have been to wrong her as much as leaving her." He strode out of the garden and on to the common. This long stretch of heather was not calculated to raise his spirits. "Only last night," he said to himself over and over again,—

"only last night, under these very stars, I held that soft, palpitating little figure in my arms." Oh, poor innocent blue eyes, why should he have made them shed so many tears! Perhaps they were, even now, weeping under the skylight where the stars—these same stars which now seemed to look down upon him reproachfully—looked in at her pityingly.

At this point Cecil cursed himself furiously.

At the same moment poor, forsaken Ruthanna was praying for him,—not, however, in her little garret, but in the hut among the heather where she had known the utmost rapture of loving, and its most bitter pain.

Somehow these stars were unbearable. Cecil returned to the house and entered his room. There was a writing-table there. He lit his candles and sat down, and hastily wrote a few impassioned words to Ruthanna. Then he read them, and immediately held them in the flame of the candle.

He strode about the room for a time. Finally he took the golden lock of hair which Ruthanna had given him, and laid it on his black coat-sleeve, and looked down at it long and earnestly. Then he blew out the lights and went down to the drawing-room.

The music was over for the time, and Mr. Morrison was seated on the couch near Mrs. Calverley, talking to her. Victoria was wandering about in a certain free way she had, looking at this and that. She came up to Cecil as he entered. "Poor fellow!" she said, half in mockery, half in earnest, "and you have not found it all roses? Well, bury the past and begin afresh."

"Victoria, what do you mean?" he asked her. His tone was not angered; he had a wild hope that she understood. Oh, if she would understand and still pity!

The right-doer on whom fate casts a burden may, and does, need sympathy. But he needs it not half so much as the man who has yielded to temptation while possessing a sense of a higher stand-point which might have been attained.

"I mean," said Victoria, "when we have made a mistake, consciously or otherwise, it is best to try and forget it and begin afresh. To brood over an error is enervating."

They had seated themselves in a quiet corner. Victoria had a portfolio on her lap, and turned the sketches over as she talked.

"But," began Cecil, earnestly, "may it not be that if you try to forget, you may end by trying to believe—to believe it never happened, and cease to blame yourself, or at least excuse yourself?"

Victoria looked at him straight with those unflinching eyes of hers.

"At least do not let the past cripple the future," she made answer.

At this moment Cecil felt his cousin might become the guide of his so-far erratic life.

"How do you manage to read me so?" he asked her.

"How can I tell?" she said, with a laugh. "One can never say how one reads people."

"It seems like magic," continued Cecil.

"Yet," rejoined Victoria, "I know nothing, and shall never ask you to tell me anything."

"Don't," said Cecil. "I should be obliged to answer you."

"Would it trouble you so much to have me know?" she asked.

"It would. Don't ask me."

"I will never ask you; but, if I am not mistaken in you, you may tell me without."

"Oh, no! no!" said Cecil, with sudden energy. "I am not likely ever to tell *you*."

As he spoke, his true heart seemed revealed to himself. Victoria, of all others, was the one he could love for life: if she knew about Ruthanna would she not hate him? What did she suspect? what did she mean by her strange words?

If Cecil had made a clean breast of it, he might have saved himself much trouble. At least he would have had the satisfaction of feeling honest; and there is no satisfaction like it. But, still selfish, he thought of the possible loss to himself should he make the revelation, and remained silent. Victoria, of course, knew he had something on his conscience, but she could not know that he had designedly won the heart of a young girl, to cast it from him. Perhaps after he had induced Victoria to marry him he would tell her all. She could not then so easily turn her back on him. Poor Cecil! he did not understand that such revelations after marriage sometimes make a chasm nothing can bridge.

That Victoria cared for him was clear, in spite of her habitual ridicule of him. And what proved this most convincingly was that in the hour of his trouble she dropped her bantering tone and became only a sympathetic woman.

There are times in our life when we feel stationary. Nothing is likely to happen for that time at least. It is then that those who have studied life generally, rather than their own particular and for the most part insignificant existence, look out for squalls.

Cecil felt for the moment in calm water. He longed to forget the wrong he had done to Ruthanna. He thought he saw his way to do so. It would be all right in the end. Of course she would feel for a time, but after that she would marry John Ford, and when happy would be able to smile at that dream of her childish days. It was not, after all, as if he had done the girl any real and tangible wrong. Victoria's kindness was like an opiate to his disturbed spirit.

It was after the visitors had gone, and Violet and Victoria had retired to their rooms, that Mrs. Calverley observed to Cecil,—

"I am very uneasy just now, my own boy. Your father has been much more retiring since you went to Handswick. He does not look well, either. He has grown thinner, and his eyes seem sunken."

"Don't be alarmed, mother," said Cecil (being encouraged himself, he felt inclined to pass it on). "Father buries himself in books; and such people nearly always develop such looks. He hasn't complained of anything, has he?"

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Calverley, hastily, "but I have never known him complain of anything. It isn't his way. It is that that alarms me."

"I'll go and hunt him up," said Cecil, and straightway betook himself to the library, which he had not visited since that day when he had asked for a check to enable him to go to Handswick. His father had looked well enough at dinner, he meditated; his mother must be getting nervous. But then in the candlelight it was so easy to be deceived. Still, these bookworms had a way of looking ill.

Cecil opened the library door and looked in. There sat the old scholar, his head resting on his hand, a book open before him. Cecil advanced a step or two into the room, then paused. His father did not raise his head. Cecil came a little nearer. A mongrel cur started up and placed itself between the old scholar and his son. It showed its teeth. On the knees of the old man another nondescript animal reposed. It raised its head and also showed its teeth.

"Father," said Cecil, gently. Both animals, responsive to the tone, changed their tactics and began to whine.

No answer came from the old scholar.

"Father," said Cecil, in a louder tone, and coming quite close to him.

Still no answer.

Cecil stooped down and gazed into the kind old face. Good God! what did he see? The face had an unnatural pallor upon it, the eyes appeared as if unseeing! He tried to raise the head, but, to his horror, it was already all but flexed upon the hand where it rested. Yes, there was no doubt of it, the lonely old scholar was dead.

The days that followed at Heatherdene before the gentle, lonely old man was laid in the church-yard were terrible enough.

Laid out in a grand coffin, in a stately chamber, the peaceful body could scarcely be more lonely than when the soul had inhabited it. Yet how lonely the dead appear to us! What a fearful thing it seems to put out of sight, in the darkness underground, dear eyes that have looked love into ours, dear hands that have pressed ours in sympathy, dear lips that have met ours so tenderly! Yet, though our life seems almost to ebb out of us when we must say farewell to the beloved body and hide it away, if we *know* we have faithfully tried to brighten the dear life while it remained with us, we are saved the bitterest of all pangs, *remorse*. The death that closes some eyes opens others. The death of Mr. Calverley opened his wife's eyes, and Cecil's too. They knew then what they might have known all along; but it was too late. Mr. Calverley had died of heart-disease; and yet he had never once complained of being ill. Both mother and son had to hear from medical lips that his sufferings must have often been fearful. It dawned on these two then that his mental sufferings might have exceeded the physical.

Mrs. Calverley collapsed utterly. Cecil felt the only relief would be to shoot himself. So selfish a life as his had been could be of no further importance to any one.

As for Violet, she did not feel like the others,—altar-cloths and general church-work made her feel so good. It is a question, moreover, if Violet Calverley really felt much about anything, though she would have looked with a Madonna-like gentle reproach at any one

who had told her so, and would have forgiven him or her at once as a church duty.

Victoria was, as she said, "really horribly cut up." She did wish she hadn't accepted things as she had found them at Heatherdene. It had been so much a matter of course that no one should take any particular notice of Mr. Calverley. Why hadn't she seen an inch before her face? She might have then done something to ease her uncle's life.

There is one way that will save us from this sort of awakening; that is, never to imagine that those about us do not need sympathy, and to give it to all around us freely and liberally. It is like the widow's cruse of oil in that case: it can never become exhausted; it is a living fount, ever newly replenished.

"Victoria," said Cecil, the day before the funeral, "I'm not sure I don't wish I was lying in that coffin."

She looked at him now with eyes that had lost their inscrutability. They were full of womanly love.

"Cecil," she said, coming quite close to him, "I did not know there was all this in you. Believe me, it is pain to *me* to see you suffer."

They were together in the blue drawing-room, which was darkened. Outside the sun was shining on the gay dahlias and tall lilies. How often has one heard people complain that Nature should rejoice when they are sad! They say it is want of sympathy. But they forget that if the flowers and skies hid their brightness because of a sorrowing heart, there would be no gay flowers, no sunny sky. Let the wretched rather take hope because Nature smiles when tears dim their eyes. It is that the bright and beautiful is the real and lasting. It is the promise of a persistent bliss, somewhere.

While Victoria spoke, Cecil felt for a moment impelled to tell her everything and so relieve his overburdened heart. But that wretch "Worldlywiseman" warned him not to do so. Instinct is often so much the better guide.

"I have not taken my last look at poor father," Cecil said. "I cannot do it to-morrow: will you come with me now?"

Together these two cousins entered the darkened chamber where what had been the old scholar lay. The coffin was upon the bedstead. The left-off body was covered with white flowers. The flowers were not purer than the gentle face with the closed eyes.

But what was that lying upon the breast? They came close. It was one of the poor forlorn little mongrel curs he had rescued. It was motionless as the corpse itself. At first Victoria tried to remove it; but it uttered a cry so lamentable that she let it remain.

"These were his friends," said Cecil, bitterly. "Oh, to feel one's self beneath a dog!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SORROW OF THE STRICKEN HEART.

ON the Monday when Cecil said farewell to Handswick, Ruthanna was up betimes. It was washing-day, and she would have to do most of the house-work while her mother and Mrs. Billington were at the wash-tub. Samson was particularly fractious on this morning, and applied his small nails vigorously to his sister's pretty face. Mrs. Trent chanced to witness this operation; and she seemed to find it amusing, for she laughed. Samson showed considerable signs of becoming another Joseph when he grew older. Poor little Ruthanna was suffering so deeply that her mother's laugh was more than her overstrung nerves could endure. She wiped a streak of blood off her cheek, and then hastily and angrily set Samson down on the floor. Of course he raised a howl.

"Tak him up," shouted the mother, who could see all from the wash-house, which opened into the kitchen.

Ruthanna doggedly obeyed. But Samson thought fit to repeat the finger-nail experiment, this time still more vigorously. Then Ruthanna smartly slapped his hands. The heart-rending screams which followed soon brought Mrs. Trent from the wash-tub.

"What have thee done to him?" she demanded, at the top of her voice.

"I slapped him," the girl answered.

"I'll teach thee to slap him!" cried the mother, giving her daughter a stinging blow on the cheek, which left it a vivid red. "There, now, shall thee hit him again?"

"If he scratches me, I shall," the girl replied.

The mother followed this remark with another blow, which sent Ruthanna reeling. Samson slipped from her arms and fell with a thud on to the floor. He really had something to cry for this time; but, with the usual inconsistency of these working-women, Mrs. Trent now attacked him. She both slapped and shook him, telling him to "shut up his row, for he wasner hurt," and finally she deposited him on the door-step outside, and slammed the door, which the young gentleman belabored with his baby feet and hands incessantly till Ruthanna fetched him in and comforted him. It is a sad sight to see the comfortless give comfort. Yet these are they who most often do it. It is necessary to understand a need before one can supply it.

Cecil had left her! he had never meant to marry her! Oh, the utter desolation this thought brought to poor Ruthanna! Poor child! she had so entirely given herself to him!

On this evening she took the clothes to the mangle as usual. How glad she was to be in the open air, free from that now oppressive home-life, where the whole atmosphere was impregnated with complaining and vulgarity! She would hurry, and so gain time to wander on the heath a little, and so feel nearer to him.

The yellow gorse-flowers and the purple heather breathed that refinement she now understood but could not have defined. They

were part of her dream of him, as were the sky overhead, and the song of the birds.

Samson being asleep, Ruthanna went alone. Susie Stopes was at the door when she delivered her bundle.

"Well, Ruthanna," she exclaimed, "thee *were* got up yesterday! How much did thy things cost?"

Ruthanna smiled that same curious smile that had made Cecil so uncomfortable the day before. "I dunner care for the things," she answered, "and I mun be going." And she sped away, leaving Susie much puzzled.

The sun was dipping behind the dark woods of Berridge as Ruthanna reached the common. The sky was flecked with light, rosy clouds. A beautiful calm glow rested upon the undulating heath. The workmen were already sitting on the bench outside the rustic inn in the distance. Ruthanna hurried through the tall bracken to the spot where she and Cecil had lain and he had read to her those poems which she had not understood. But it had been his voice that she had heard, and that had filled her with an unaccustomed palpitating joy.

How could the patch of deserted turf smile so brightly under the glowing sky!

Ruthanna threw herself down upon that couch that had been so delightful. Where was the velvet pillow now? Gone! gone! She burst into passionate weeping, kissing the soft short grass where he had lain, stretching out her arms desolately for what had been and now was not. "Come back! come back!" she moaned, "or let me die!"

And, even while she wept, another gazed down upon her, with a face on which agony was written. What instinct had led John Ford here now? What told him that here and now he would find the forsaken child he would have given his life to comfort? Just this,—that love is the harbinger of insight, and John Ford loved.

He moved away, as he had done on that other occasion. He must not speak to her now. And he went, as he had done before, to the Berridge Lakes, and sat down on the strip of land between the two. The red of the sky was reflected in the water. The shy water-hen sailed in and out of the tall rushes with her little brood. The leaves of the overhanging trees rustled faintly. All was peace. But within this man's heart was a tempest,—a hurricane.

He scarcely knew what he thought, or what he felt. He simply sat and stared at the water, possessed by a single awful sensation.

In the mean time, Ruthanna had risen and wandered on towards the hut. Yes, there it stood, just the same, but how changed! She entered and seated herself upon the heap of hay, while with one nervous little hand she plucked at the dried grass at her side. Presently her fingers touched something hard. She looked down. It was a gold cuff-link which Cecil had worn. She carried it to her lips and wept afresh.

She sat on till the rosy tints had died out of the sky, to be replaced by a purple gray, and the white mists had risen to brood on the hollows. Then she crept forth, and wandered, with apathetic, lagging steps, through the bracken.

It was just then that John Ford was passing along the white road close at hand. He knew her at once in the twilight, and waited for her at the foot of the path she was descending. She did not see him till she was close upon him. Then she tried to pass him.

"Dunner avoid me, Ruthanna," said John Ford, humbly, his whole face quivering with emotion. "I wunner speak of myself."

"Dunner speak at all," said Ruthanna, desolately. "I dunner want to hear no one talk to me no more."

But John Ford still stood in her path. "Ruthanna," he said, in a low, choking voice, "let me help thee. There is nothing as can matter to me but helping thee now."

She raised her eyes to his, and even in her misery, nay, because of it, saw the anguish in his face, and pitied him. She stretched out her hand to him; he took it tenderly and reverently in his. "Thee hast been very good to me, John," she said. "I amner worth it. Think no more of me."

"But I mun think of thee, Ruthanna, while I live. I couldner help it if I tried. Some might; I couldner."

"I am very sorry for thee," said Ruthanna. "I wish, I do wish I had never been born!"

"I dunner wish that for myself," said the honest fellow. "If I can help thee, I am glad I was born."

"No one can help me," said Ruthanna, softly; "nothing but perhaps death."

"Dunner speak of death, Ruthanna."

"Why munner I?" she answered. "Thee canner know my trouble."

"I know it all, Ruthanna; but it may not be so bad as thee thinks. He may come back."

"No, he wunner come back," she replied, mournfully. "But how do thee know about him?"

"Never mind; but if it would comfort thee to talk of him sometimes, and ease thy heart, thee can talk to me, Ruthanna, and have no fears."

"And thee will say nothing against him?" she asked, anxiously.

"No, I wunner say nothing against him," he made answer, with a pang at his heart.

"Oh, I love him so! I love him so! and he has left me!" she broke out suddenly. "He never meant to marry me; but you munner say nothing against him. He is a gentleman, and mun please himself. It was me as was wrong for thinking he meant it. A girl like me hadner ought to have thought of him. But I love him! I love him! and it has welly broke my heart!"

How he longed to put his arms about her! But he stood still there in the gathering shadows, looking at her with such tender longing and pain that, had her eyes not been blinded, she might have seen how great a treasure she had cast from her, while she clung to what had proved itself but dross.

But with some of us to love once is to love forever, let the object turn out unworthy or not. It was even so with this simple country-

girl. Cecil had played with her and left her, but she must still love him.

"Shall us be walking towards home?" John asked her, after a pause.

"Oh, yes!" said Ruthanna: "I mun go. My mother'll be angry again."

They walked along the white road side by side till the common was left behind and high hedges lay on each side of them, one bounding a cornfield which was now but stubble, the other a fair meadow. Then, still silent, they reached the village green, and passed from thence into the Birmingham road.

John left her at her garden gate. "I shall think of thee, Ruthanna," he said.

"I thank thee; but thee had better not," she answered, and they parted.

John Ford lived in lodgings, and having reached them went straight to his room, which was, like Ruthanna's, a garret. He lit his lamp and sat down at his table. It was littered with books. As Mr. Lane had said, this working-man was a student. He took down a volume on Dynamics from a hanging book-shelf and tried to drown his pain in problems. His pain, do I say? *her* pain, rather, for it was for *her* he suffered. Perchance could he see her happy with the man she loved, his own pain at her loss would awake and slay him.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOPES.

"SUMMUT has gone wrong with Ruthanna," Mr. Trent observed the following Sunday evening to his wife: "her's so quiet, and her has no color."

"I see nothing wrong with her," answered the mother, sharply. "Thee art always bothering about that wench now."

"I'll tell thee something," said the iron-worker, with a steely gleam in his eyes: "her's got a chance of raisin' hersel'."

Mrs. Trent was engaged in laying the supper-table. Ruthanna was in the room above, trying to soothe Samson. Joseph and Abraham had not yet come in after chapel.

Mrs. Trent stopped her operations and stared at her husband.

"Of raisin' hersel'! What do thee mean?"

"Well," chuckled the iron-worker, "young Mr. Honeyman has took a fancy to her, and his payments has took a fancy to her; and that is why I got her the new things."

Mrs. Trent was almost stunned by this intelligence. She couldn't answer anything.

"That is why," went on the iron-worker, "I havener encouraged John Ford of late."

"There's that Haydn Blackhouse, too," said Mrs. Trent, reflectively. "I don't think her cares tuppence for him," rejoined the father,

decidedly. "This morning he was at the big chapel and waiting for her at the gallery stairs, and her wouldner so much as look at him."

"But her spoke to John Ford coming from chapel to-night," observed Mrs. Trent; "and I do believe I saw him give her something."

The conversation was cut short at this point by the entrance of Abraham and Joseph.

It was a fact that John Ford had given something to Ruthanna.

That morning (there is a Sunday post at Handswick) he had received a letter from Mr. Calverley and a packet which he was requested to convey to Ruthanna. Poor John! Fate did not seem to spare him.

The letter ran,—

"I am sending a little parting gift to Ruthanna through you, for I know your honest love for her, and, believe me, my greatest wish is that she may one day crown your hopes. A girl so young as she is soon forgets, and I swear I never meant things to go so far as they did. Win her confidence and comfort her,—and think as badly of me as you think fit. I deserve and shall accept it all. But you, with your education and intelligence, must see that for me to have married the poor child would have been a calamity for *her*. Teach her to understand this. You will make her happy; then perhaps she may forgive me. But I shall never forgive myself."

This letter was a great blow to John Ford. It was now perfectly clear to him that Cecil had left Ruthanna forever. He gathered no comfort, however, from this for himself. Indeed, he thought not of himself at all. Before going to chapel he answered Cecil's letter in a way that made that gentleman smart. This is what he wrote:

"SIR,—

"I have delivered the packet as you desired.

"Yours truly,
"JOHN FORD."

But what did the packet contain?

Ruthanna opened it in her little attic, seated on her bed. After taking off the wrapper with her trembling hands, she found a small leather case. At first she could not open it, but at last she succeeded, and there lay on a rosy satin bed a tiny necklace of real pearls. She did not know their value. To her they were only "his thought of her." She had removed her fine velvet dress, and she fastened the little necklace round her neck. It did not fit closely, but lay caressingly on the fair, warm skin. She always wore it from this time, but out of sight under her dress.

It was on this afternoon that Ruthanna wrote her first and last letter.

"DEAR SIR,"—it began,—"I have got the present. I will kepe it, but not to remember thee by. I hope thee will be more happy than me. I do not reproche thee."

"RUTHANNA."

This letter Ruthanna gave to John Ford to post for her when she met him on the heath next day.

Poor, faithful John ! he was waiting for her where he knew she would come after taking the clothes as usual to the mangle.

"Ruthanna," he said at once as she drew near him, "I've thought of something as may comfort thee."

She looked up wistfully and incredulously into his kind, freckled face.

"Thee shall come to Walsall and have thy photograph took, and I will send it him. Thee shall have thy fine velvet dress on, and thy pretty hat. He canner help keeping it, and if he looks at it he canner help coming back to thee, Ruthanna."

The poor girl caught at the suggestion like a drowning man at a straw. "I will do it!" she exclaimed. Then a sudden revulsion of feeling came over her. "I canner do it," she said.

"And why?" asked John.

"I havener any money."

It is curious, but a fact, that Mr. Trent gave no pocket-money whatever to his children.

"But I have money," said John, eagerly, "and all I have is for thee if thee will tak it."

Ruthanna did not at all realize that to let John Ford pay for this photograph was very much like letting a man buy the rope he is to be hanged with. But one thought absorbed her,—the loss—the possible regaining—of Cecil.

"When can us have it done?" she asked, forgetting even to thank him. But then he wanted no thanks from her : it was enough that he could bring her a moment's respite.

"Canner you go with me and Abraham next Saturday afternoon?" he asked.

"I clean the 'brights' for mother Saturday afternoons," she replied, doubtfully, "but I could sit up and do 'em on Friday night."

"Then I'll talk to Abraham about it to-morrow at the works," he said.

"But Abraham doesn't know about—about Mr. Calverley," she rejoined.

"Oh, yes, he does. I told him ; and he thinks with me."

"Thee art very good to me," was all she could reply.

When John parted with Ruthanna that night he knew true joy ; but he thought it was sorrow.

There is a studio on the bridge at Walsall where one can get a really good photograph, and it was there that Ruthanna went with her brother and John Ford. The true reason for Ruthanna's going to Walsall had been kept strictly from every one at the Trents' except Abraham, who took her with him.

The photograph was a success,—at least as far as the negative went, and copies were promised by Wednesday. They were to be sent to John Ford. After this business was settled, the three wandered into the High Street, which, it being Saturday and market-day, was lively enough. It looked like a fair ; stalls were ranged on both sides of

the road nearly up to St. Matthew's Church at the top of the hill, and a crowd of purchasers moved hither and thither on the pavements. Ruthanna enjoyed the scene, and laughed and chatted almost like her old self. The photograph might do so much for her, she thought. John Ford laughed too. It made him gay to see her more like herself.

The two men remembered that day at Walsall afterwards with a pang. It was the last time either of them saw Ruthanna laugh.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO.

ON the Friday afternoon following the events last recorded, Cecil Calverley entered the blue drawing-room, and found his cousin engaged in writing.

"Are you doing anything very particular, Vic?" he asked her.

"No. Why?" she answered.

"I wish you would talk to a fellow a bit, then. Violet is off on church-work. I'm sure I think she might find quite as much Christian duty at home just now, with mother shut up in her room as she is."

"Well, Cecil," began Victoria, slowly, and getting up from the table where she had been writing, "you know Aunt Agatha won't let either Violet or me be with her. She will be alone; and I do believe she spends all her time in crying over her old love-letters. This morning when I went in to see her she had a whole heap of letters spread out before her,—yellow old letters,—and she begged me to go away and let her forget the present in the past."

"I wish there wasn't such a thing as regret," said Cecil, irritably.

"Regrets are the making of some of us, I guess," said Victoria.

"Have you any, then?"

"Very likely, Cecil."

"Well, you can't have wrong things you have done to regret?"

"Why should I be so different from the rest of human beings? I suppose every one has something to regret."

"Anyway, it can't be anything very bad if you've done it, Victoria."

"You think so?"

"I know it."

There was silence for a few moments; then Cecil spoke again:

"It seems to be my fate to make people miserable. I shall end by making you miserable, if you care enough about me to be influenced one way or the other."

"You *may* make me miserable, perhaps; you have not done so yet."

"But, after all," said Cecil, coming close to her and toying with the pen she had laid down, "it can't matter much whether I have the power to make you miserable. You could rise above that. The thing is, can I make you happy?"

A deep flush overspread Victoria's face and neck. She did not reply. She laid her hand upon the table and looked away.

"Oh, Vic, don't you know I love you?" Cecil broke out, placing his own hand on hers as it lay on the table. "You who are so quick to see things, have you not seen that?"

She brought her wonderful eyes to rest upon his face, and answered, truthfully,—

"Yes, I have seen it. But, Cecil," she went on, "have you not something else to tell me?"

Cecil possessed himself of both her hands. "Only this: will you be my wife, Victoria?"

She looked at him calmly and steadily. She did not remove her hands, but said, after a moment's pause,—

"And is there nothing you think you ought to tell the woman you ask to be your wife?"

"What can you mean, Vic?"

"If you do not know, how should I?"

Cecil tried to look at her, but he could not. Moreover, he could see, as if actually present, the reproachful eyes of Ruthanna. Ought he to tell Victoria about her? Oh, he could not! she would despise him so! and, after all, he had done no more than many other young men. Why did women like Victoria demand so much?

"What can you want to know, more than that I love you and ask you to be my wife, Vic? Oh, do not torture me with vague questionings, but give me the comfort of your love. Whatever I may have been in the past, your love can work wonders in the future. I seem to have no stability, no foothold. If you won't love me I don't know what will become of me."

"You know what you have to offer, Cecil, and I what I have to give. Yes, I love you; I have always loved you; but—but do not deceive me. I could be terrible if deceived."

Again Cecil felt that he ought to make a clean breast of it about Ruthanna; again he refused to listen to his better instinct.

"I can never deceive you," he said, referring in his own mind to the future rather than to the past. Of course he would be true to Victoria. He had never wished to marry any one else. Moreover, he did love her.

At this moment a servant entered with a packet for Cecil. It should have come by the morning post, and had now been sent by special messenger.

He looked at the handwriting, and a flush rose to his cheek.

"What is it?" inquired Victoria.

"Oh, nothing," he replied, putting it into his pocket.

"Then why did you flush so?"

"Oh, did I flush?"

"Certainly you did."

"It's because I am nervous since father's death, I suppose," he replied.

"Why don't you open the packet, then?" Victoria demanded.

"It can wait," said Cecil. "I want to talk to you just now."

"Haven't you said all you need for now?"

"I haven't heard all I need, Victoria. Say you will be my wife; say it, or I swear I shall be a ruined man."

"No one ought to let a woman's refusal ruin him," said Victoria.

"But you don't mean to refuse me!" Cecil exclaimed, with a white-enough face now.

"No," said Victoria, "I am going to accept you; but I feel it is in the dark."

"How in the dark?"

"I cannot explain; I can only feel."

"Then feel my love for you; think of nothing else. Love shouldn't argue and investigate; it should trust."

"I suppose so," said Victoria, "but I guess I am made of different stuff from most women."

"That is just why I love you. You are the only woman I ever saw who could lead me. I want leading. I want to be made something of, and you alone can do it. But, for God's sake, Victoria, don't be always suspecting things."

Here occurred a second interruption. Violet came in. She looked almost like a Sister of Mercy, for she had chosen to have her mourning made with a plainness that was quite severe.

"I have something to tell you both," Violet began, demurely; "and I want you—one of you—to tell mamma." Then she paused.

"Out with it!" said Cecil, encouragingly.

"Well, then," said Violet, looking down, "Mr. Fairbank has asked me to be his wife."

"And you have accepted him?" inquired Victoria, smiling.

"Yes."

"Shall I tell her?" Cecil asked Victoria.

"As you like," she answered.

"Well, then, Violet, Vic has just promised to be *my* wife!"

"Oh, Vic!" cried Violet, embracing her cousin, "the dream of my life is realized!"

While the two women were thus engaged, Cecil made his escape to his own room. Once inside, he locked the door, and, throwing himself into an easy-chair, took the letter from his pocket. What could John Ford be sending him that was so bulky? He had been anything but pleased with John's last curt letter to himself. He might have been more generous, Cecil thought, after such a letter as he had written. Besides, he argued, John himself was left with a free field by his (Cecil's) departure. Ruthanna's note, too, had deprived him of sleep for the night. He wished he had not sent her the necklace at all. It had only opened the wound afresh. And now what was this new complication? Cecil felt too angry to open the packet. If John Ford and Co. kept sending him things it might make it very awkward with Victoria, who was both spirited and suspicious. What could have made her so curious about this packet? Cecil felt almost angry with poor forsaken Ruthanna.

Presently he opened the packet. There was something between card-board, wrapped in tissue-paper. He took off this paper, and his

heart began to thump as if it would burst its bounds ; it seemed to leap and struggle like a live thing. It was Ruthanna's own self looking at him from that piece of card-board,—her own exquisite childish face, with its halo of short curls on forehead and cheek. What sweet curves and dimples ! The pure blue eyes were looking straight into his with a light of hope in them which verged on sadness. Her pretty round figure showed in all its beauty as she leaned on a chair-back, her little work-hardened hands lying one over the other. The photograph had not revealed their roughness, and this Ruthanna whom he now gazed upon might have been a lady, so dainty and refined did she look. Yet he would have preferred to have a photograph of her in the old ill-fitting dress and shabby hat.

He lay back in his chair and held the photograph in his hand a long time, just looking at it. Then with a sudden impulse he covered it with kisses,—he who had that day asked Victoria to be his wife. He was seized with a wild desire to see Ruthanna once more, even though she should not know it. He actually got out his Bradshaw, and worried his brain for an excuse to go to Handswick for one night. But this was practical, and the practical often puts to flight the emotional. It did so in this case. "What a fool I am !" he thought. "Of course this photograph is sent me to get me back. But why should John Ford send it ? Surely it is to his interest to keep me away." Cecil put aside the Bradshaw and his feelings at the same time ; and, sitting down at his writing-table, which stood under a window in his room, he wrote,—

"DEAR MR. FORD,—

"It was kind of you to send me Ruthanna's portrait. I regret I have not one of my own to send in return. But possibly it is just as well.

"Yours truly,

"CECIL CALVERLEY.

"P. S.—It would be better not to communicate with me again. Let mistakes be forgotten as soon as possible.

"C. C."

CHAPTER XIX.

DESPAIR.

WHEN Ruthanna first looked upon her portrait, a glad light overspread her face. Could it be that she was as lovely as that ? Hitherto she had seen but a dim reflection of herself in her little cracked mirror. If this beautiful girl smiling at her from the card-board were really like her, and if he looked on it, surely, surely he would come back. "Oh, dear picture !" cried the child, kissing it again and again, "thee mun bring him back to me !"

Mr. Trent was in a state of jubilant enthusiasm when he saw one of the photographs. He did not trouble to inquire who had paid for it. If he had thought at all about it, he would have supposed Abraham had.

It was on Wednesday evening that Mr. Trent first saw his daughter's photograph; and he was not long in deciding that it would be a good move on his part to show it to young Honeyman. He put on a clean shirt and collar, and finally donned his Sunday black suit and sallied forth.

Mrs. Trent racked her brain considerably as to what this might mean. There was a service at the chapel on this night, always, but she had never known her husband put on his best clothes for that. As for the iron-worker, he was as silent as the Sphinx when he chose; and he did choose now. It was useless to ply him with questions.

He found Mr. Honeyman, junior, behind his counter, studying the latest quotations for drugs. The chemist looked up rather curiously as the iron-worker entered. Somehow it struck him that Mr. Trent had not come as a customer.

After the usual civilities, the iron-worker produced the photograph, and handed it to the chemist, remarking, as he did so, "Now, isner her a little wench to be proud on?"

Honeyman studied the picture for a few moments, and then said, seriously enough, "She really is deucedly pretty." Then he handed it back and waited.

"Doesner her look a shake above a wife for a working-man?" demanded the father.

"Well, she does," the young man admitted.

"And there's money for her when her marries," went on the iron-worker, significantly. "What would thee think of takking the little wench theesel'?"

The murmur was out now, and the iron-worker waited breathlessly.

Honeyman took up the picture again, and looked at it. "I think I might easily do a good deal worse," he said, presently. "But what reason have you to suppose she would listen to me?"

"Her'll have to listen to who I like," said the father decidedly.

"I don't know what my people would say," Honeyman next observed, still looking at the picture.

"Oh, as to that," broke in Mr. Trent, hastily, "it was thy father as first gave me the notion. He said as how him and his missis had took a good deal of notice of my girl, and as how they thought her so pretty and genteel-looking."

Still young Honeyman gazed at the lovely face before him. It seemed to take possession of him.

"Shall I look in on Sunday evening and see her?" he asked.

"Yes: come and have a bit of supper," rejoined the delighted father.

So it was settled. And, purposely leaving the photograph with the young man, Mr. Trent withdrew.

"This is a d——d rum go!" Honeyman exclaimed aloud when his visitor had gone; and then he fell to studying the picture again. "But I'll do it! By Gad, she is a stunner; and I can have her taught

something. She is still young." Then (it is a pity to have to write it) the most hateful of all motives—sordid ones—came in. Young Honeyman had been throwing away his money foolishly. He owed a large sum for drugs at Southall's of which his father knew nothing. Of course he had a good business, seeing that he was the only chemist in the place; but, after all, it is not what one gets so much as what one spends that counts. Ruthanna's money would be very acceptable; and it was not at all unlikely that old Trent had saved a good deal of money.

Sunday came; and it brought to Ruthanna "the beginning of the end." From this time the poor child smiled no more.

John Ford had debated with himself long and painfully whether he should show Ruthanna Mr. Calverley's letter, and at last had made up his mind that the sooner she knew the truth the better. So on the Sunday morning after chapel, with an agonized prayer in his heart for her, he gave her the letter.

She opened and read it in her little garret, seated on her bed. As she read, her eyes dilated, but no tears came. She read the terrible words again and again. Then at last full realization came; and her heart died within her. She no longer felt. It was as if she existed not. All, all seemed swept away,—herself a part of the devastation. That form seated upon the bed,—it could not be herself; it was some one she had no interest in, was not even sorry for, had no curiosity about. She rose from her seat and put on her old dress and went down to dinner. She was in a dream. The noisy family round the table were but so many figures in her dream. Yet no one noticed that she was different.

She went to Sunday-school in the afternoon, and to chapel in the evening. Still no one but poor John Ford saw that her heart was broken; and he, alas! could not help her.

Then after evening service young Honeyman came in, and was seated in the chair covered with American cloth,—the same that Cecil had occupied on that ever-memorable Sunday night. The room looked exactly the same as on that day which seemed now so long, long past. But when Mr. Calverley had come, Ruthanna had not been allowed to keep on her best dress. On this night she was bidden to do so. She never questioned why, but came down in her fair pale beauty, and sat near the chintz-valanced table on which the plants stood. She was not surprised, nor pleased, nor sorry, to see young Honeyman there. Thought was dead within her. Yet in her calm pallor she appeared even more beautiful than before. Young Honeyman gazed at her till his pulses beat wildly. He must have her at once, he thought; he could brook no delays. He had never seen a girl half so beautiful as she looked now. She was like a fair white lily. The two were alone in the room. Mr. Trent had gone out and closed the door. No one was near except Joseph, who, in his favorite dishabille of "stocking-feet," was applying his eye to the key-hole.

"Why not get it over?" thought Honeyman.

He left his uncomfortable, slippery chair and seated himself on another near the girl. "Ruthanna," he began, going direct to the point, "I love you."

She looked at him in a dazed way, and said nothing.

"I want you to be my wife," he went on. "You will try to care for me a little, won't you?"

Still she looked at him with calm eyes, not understanding.

"Ruthanna," he repeated, "do you not understand? I say I love you."

She did not seem to hear.

Then the young man tried to overcome her apparent shyness by a caress.

This roused her. She started to her feet, her eyes flashing, her breast heaving. "I could kill thee for that!" she cried, and, without another word, quitted the room, nearly tumbling over Joseph, who was trying to make his escape from the key-hole.

"By Jove!" exclaimed the mystified chemist, staring at the door she had closed behind her.

Then Mr. Trent, who had heard Ruthanna's retreat, came in to ask for an explanation. Honeyman gave the best he could. Mr. Trent turned and left the room without a word. It was to his daughter's garret that he betook himself. He opened the door without warning, and confronted Ruthanna seated in the dark on her bed.

"So, my wench," he began, furiously, "thee have been behaving theesel' ill to Mr. Honeyman, have thee?"

She was silent.

"Well, I'll let thee know who's master here. Thee shall never leave this here room—no, not if it is for all thy life—till thee says thee will have him. A nice thing, indeed, to turn again' one who is thy better, with thy impudence!"

With this he left her and closed the door. A moment more, and he opened it again, to say, "Dunner thee come out of this room until thee come out to say thee will have him."

When the pitying stars which had looked down all night on poor forsaken Ruthanna had hidden themselves, and the gray dawn broke, she was still sitting motionless on her bed in her velvet dress, her little hands lying in her lap.

It was thus that her mother found her some hours later when she brought her some breakfast. Mrs. Trent had become fired with the same ideas as her husband.

"Havener thee been to bed?" she said to her daughter. Ruthanna did not speak. "Little fool!" cried the loving parent, putting down the breakfast on the dressing-table.

Ruthanna saw no one else that day till evening, when Abraham came to her. She was still wearing her velvet dress.

"Ruthanna, dearie," he said, soothingly, "thee mun cease to think of Mr. Calverley."

She looked at him, but said nothing. His heart ached for her; but he must administer another blow, which he thought would rouse her.

"Ruthanna," he recommenced, "thee mun cease to think of him. Mr. Lane has heard from him, and he told John Ford this morning on

the way to the works as Mr. Calverley is going to marry his rich American cousin."

Even this information did not seem to rouse Ruthanna, and Abraham was obliged to go away without having gained anything.

The next morning when Mrs. Trent entered her daughter's room she found it *empty*.

CHAPTER XX.

"MR. CALVERLEY, I FORGIVE THEE."

IT is characteristic of the working-classes that they do not readily take alarm. To Mrs. Trent's mind there was nothing to be disturbed about in Ruthanna's having left the house. Very likely she had gone to see Susie Stopes, or some other of her friends. She would come back in the evening, of course, and then "wouldn't she get it?" Mrs. Trent was very angry, if not frightened. There was all the ironing to do, and no one to "mind" Samson. That unfortunate infant came in for a considerable number of slaps through the day. Another thing that further enraged the mother was that she had to take the dinner to the foundry herself, which would hinder her with her work. Moreover, she knew that she would have to run the gauntlet of those impudent boys who, on the only other occasion when she had been to the works, had greeted her with such remarks as "How much for thy hat, missus?" and "Mind thee ankles don't tak cold!" There really was something fearful and wonderful about Mrs. Trent's "get-up" when she went out on week-days. On these occasions she wore a scarf over her head which covered her ears and was pinned under her chin; and on the top of this was a large black straw hat decorated with bright red flowers which would have puzzled a botanist not a little. Then she wore a plaided shawl of green-and-black. This was not all, for her stockings were white, and she held her petticoats higher than is usual when threading her way where the red-hot iron lay. Hence the remarks of the boys. They said other things besides those we have mentioned, which we will not shock the refined reader by quoting. The Black Country is not refined,—very much the reverse. So it was perhaps natural that Mrs. Trent felt ill used at having to carry the dinner to her husband and sons.

"Well, missus," said the iron-worker, when he saw his wife, "how is it as thee has brought the dinner?"

"Because thy wench has gadded off again," replied the mother, defiantly.

"But I said as her was to stop in her room," he rejoined.

"And if her had stopped in her room, how could her have brought the dinner?" cried Mrs. Trent, indignantly. "It's well enough for thee to tell her to stop in her room, and me with all that ironing to do and Samson a-skrikking his head off all the time! Her shoulderner have stopped up-stairs, I can tell thee; her should have worked; but her's gone off, and when her does come back I'll tak the wind out on her sails, I promise her!"

In the course of the day Mrs. Trent told Joseph and Abraham that Ruthanna had gone off. Joseph found the fact infinitely amusing. "Won't mother give it her, just l'" he observed, gleefully. But Abraham went and told John Ford, and neither of these two men seemed to see any humor in the situation. They agreed to go in search of her as soon as they were free, before even taking off their working-clothes.

What an eternity that day's work seemed! It came to an end at last, and John and Abraham, having removed the evidences of their toil from hands and face in a rain-water butt, journeyed forth towards the heath. Neither of them supposed she had gone to her friends'.

"Her's gone to the hut," John said; "her's gone there to cry: her feels nearer to him there."

The setting sun was flooding the heath with golden light as they reached it. It was one of the last lovely evenings before the monotonous autumn rains should set in. John Ford remembered the scene as he saw it now to his dying day, every detail terribly emphasized,—the bunch of faded wild flowers tied up with grass which had been dropped upon the white road by some child, the brown rabbit which darted across the path to disappear among the bracken, the little rolled-up hedgehog in a hollow by the road-side, the words of the song a farm-boy was shouting as he trudged along towards home with his tools on his back. Yet at the time he imagined he saw nothing. "Wait a moment," he said to his friend as they neared the five mountain-ashes; and he strode in among the bracken and looked at the spot where he had seen Mr. Calverley and Ruthanna that first day. She had been there; for on the patch of turf lay her pocket-handkerchief, marked in red cotton with her name. John took it up reverently and placed it inside his waistcoat, next his heart. "We will go on to the hut," he said to Abraham. She had been to the hut, too, for on a nail in the door-way there hung a fragment of her old gray water-proof which they both knew so well.

"Maybe her's gone to the Berridge Lakes," suggested Abraham. "It's lonesome there, and when a little wench is hurt, her likes lone-some places."

So the two men went on along the white road till the Berridge woods were reached, and then they struck into the lane which led to the lakes. Oh, that grass-grown lane, with its deep ruts and its trailing brambles! it seemed afterwards to John Ford like the door that shut out hope for ever and ever. It was now and in this lane that he experienced his last hope,—that he entered on his utter despair!

On the strip of grass-grown land that separated the two lakes both men at once observed something, and made a rush towards it. It was Ruthanna's gray cloak. It lay stretched out upon the grass, which in one place showed green through a rent. Pinned to it was a scrap of paper. Both knelt upon the grass, and together they read, "Mr. Calverley, I forgive thee!" written in an awkward, straggling hand. It was then that their hearts seemed to die within them. John Ford was the first to rise to his feet and look round with awful eyes. The lake before him shone like a sea of blood under the setting sun; the trees

seemed to bend their branches like arms pointing downward. The tall rushes stirred sighingly as the water-hens moved in and out among them. But what was that other thing among the rushes which moved now and again with the lap of the water? Ah, it was at rest forever; but John Ford!—poor John Ford!—why did God not spare him?

Face downward among the rushes lay the dead body of Ruthanna Trent.

Abraham was still kneeling in a dazed way beside the little gray cloak when he saw his friend with a dripping burden in his arms. Then, still dazed, he saw John fall upon the grass, almost enwrapping the drowned girl with his own body, while he cried aloud in his living death, and cursed God and man, covering the dead face with kisses. "Oh, Ruthanna, my little broken lily!" he cried, "it was thy *dead* face as I was first to kiss!" and he pressed the poor little figure in its velvet dress to his heart. "Oh that I could have died for thee!" he moaned; and he took Ruthanna's little handkerchief from his breast and dipped it in the lake and tenderly wiped the mud-stains from the lovely still face. Then he fell to caressing the lifeless body once more, soothing it as a mother might an infant; although in the eternal calm of that child-like figure there could be no need of soothing. "Ruthanna, my first and only one," he said, with his lips upon hers, "thee art gone where I can find thee. Thee can never be another's now, and I shall find thee soon,—soon."

Tea was cleared away, and the ironing-cloth was once more upon the table at the Trent establishment. Mr. Trent was seated near the fire in his high-backed chair. Joseph was stretched upon the settle.

"Her may gad, and her may stiff her back," said the iron-worker to his wife of Ruthanna, "but her'll marry that young Honeyman; and the day'll come as her'll thank us for makking her."

"Her's a little fool," observed the mother, fixing the shape of her flat-iron in a scorch on one of her husband's shirts. "We shall see her directly; and then if I dunner mak her remember!"

"What's that row?" cried Joseph, rising on his elbow and listening.

Mrs. Trent put her iron down and listened too. Mr. Trent rose hurriedly and opened the door. There was a subdued hum of excited voices.

"There's a lot of people in the road, and something's up," said the iron-worker. "They're bringing something in at the gate," he next said.

Mrs. Trent and Joseph were by this time in the door-way, peering out into the garden in much astonishment. Then Abraham's voice was heard to say, "Make way,"—and then they saw.

In through the door-way John Ford and Abraham bore what had been Ruthanna, and laid it on the settle. The crowd tried to follow, but Mr. Trent closed the door. Two of the crowd had entered, however. One was the minister, Mr. Lane; the other was young Honeyman.

Mrs. Trent threw her apron over her head and ran from the room. Joseph hung on to the roller-towel behind the door, literally stupefied.

The iron-worker stood as still and hard as the metal he worked on. John Ford and Abraham Trent sat down in awful silence. By and by young Honeyman uttered a cry: "Good God! poor little girl! poor little girl! and only two days ago I grieved her!" The simple minister, with one hand raised above the dead face, breathed a silent prayer.

That night the stars looked down through the skylight on the pure white form on the little bed, but the blue eyes looked up at them no more.

Round Ruthanna's neck the pearl necklace had been found by Mrs. Billington, who had composed the fair limbs with a tenderness little to be expected of such a woman, and robed the little figure in its last garment.

But Ruthanna was not left alone under the stars that night. When the house was still, Abraham crept to the garret, and he knelt the whole night through beside the white bed,—not praying,—scarcely thinking; only feeling.

And, strangest of all, Joseph had come and pushed open the door, with a similar intention, but, seeing his brother, closed it softly again, and sat outside all night. He, unlike his brother, that night both thought and felt. Every unkind and unbrotherly act and word of his to that little dead sister came back to him now, and burned into his brain, awakening his soul. It is believed by some that a child in being born suffers. A *soul* in being born certainly suffers. Joseph in this one night of shame and remorse, in which he saw himself as he was, suffered almost a retribution for his past. When daylight came, and he went to his own room, he was changed. He could never again be the same cruel, heartless creature he had been.

Then came the inquest, and there were complaints because Ruthanna's clothes had been removed and her body prepared for burial. But no evidence was forthcoming as to the question of suicide, and the verdict was, "Drowned by accident." John Ford and Abraham had suppressed the scrap of paper they had found. They had other intentions about that paper. Mr. and Mrs. Lane alone suspected the truth; but they said nothing.

It was on the day of the funeral that John Ford next came to the Trents' house. He was very calm; indeed, there was something awful about his calmness. He had brought some white flowers, and he asked to be allowed to go to Ruthanna's room alone,—a permission readily enough accorded to him. She was in her coffin now, and the coffin was upon her bed. John gazed upon her as only those who know the true passion of love ever can gaze. Then from the still face his eyes travelled to the motto above her bed,—the one he had given her long ago: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." What could be whiter than that soul which had gone to God? he meditated. He had feared at one moment—the awful moment when he had found the drowned girl—that Cecil Calverley had done her an even more grievous wrong than forsaking her. But it had been proved that this fear had no foundation. One of Ruthanna's little hands—ah! it did not look red and roughened now—lay half closed at her side. In

this hand John placed the white flowers. Then he took one last long kiss from the pale lips, and went his way.

Ruthanna's body was carried away from the garret forever and laid in the church-yard on the green. The whole village mustered to witness the sad ceremony. Haydn Blackhouse was there; but he could not remain to see the coffin lowered, and fled away in the sight of all, weeping bitterly. Mr. and Mrs. Trent seemed years older, every one said. Abraham and Joseph both looked simply heart-broken. John Ford was not there. He was alone in the hut on the heath, with Ruthanna's handkerchief in his hand. He was repeating unceasingly, "I mun live till I have given Mr. Calverley the note; I mun live till her he's going to marry knows all as he has done!"

CHAPTER XXI.

REMORSE.

CECIL CALVERLEY had so much to see to in settling his father's affairs that he could not go back to Cambridge. So he saw a good deal of Victoria. He had begun to feel quite comfortable, Victoria and he got on so well; and then he had still Ruthanna's portrait to dream over at night. He kept it under his pillow, and always looked at it when he woke in the morning. "She was such a pretty, confiding little thing," he would say to himself. And then he would try to picture her as John Ford's wife and the mother of his children. The idea was comforting and painful at the same time. To think of her in the arms of another man could not but give Cecil a twinge. Yet to be happy with Victoria it was necessary that he should not think of Ruthanna as pining away.

It had been arranged that the cousins should marry almost at once. Victoria had no mother, and her father considered it would simplify matters considerably to have his daughter suitably married. He had no fixed home, which he considered bad for a girl. Then his silver-mines would constantly be taking him away, even if he had a home. Victoria wouldn't settle with her aunt Angélique at Paris, and seemed to prefer Heatherdene to any other place. And now that Cecil had come into the property,—small though it was,—the way seemed clear. Then, of course, Victoria would have an ample income of her own.

Mrs. Calverley agreed most thoroughly in these plans. She had become fond of her niece, and dreaded losing her. Then, again, she thought it just as well that Cecil should settle down. Of course he could complete his degree at Cambridge if he liked; but there could be no real need of it.

Violet hoped that the marriage of her cousin and her brother would be celebrated as soon as possible; for she felt she could not in all conscience leave her widowed mother alone yet, and Mr. Fairbank was anxious that their own marriage should not be delayed. Of course if the marriages took place so soon after Mr. Calverley's death they would have to be quite private.

It was on the Monday evening after Ruthanna's funeral that Mrs.

Calverley first came down to dinner with the rest of the family. It is always a shock to see a woman one knows well, dressed as a widow for the first time. So all felt it at Heatherdene when Mrs. Calverley took her accustomed seat at the dinner-table. Cecil was opposite to her now, instead of the old scholar. Victoria and Violet sat on either side. It was a gloomy enough dinner; but when the ladies rose to go, Cecil kissed his mother's forehead as she passed him. The widow smiled at him with tears in her eyes, and said, "My own boy!" Victoria smiled at Cecil too: she liked his paying this little attention to his mother.

Alone, Cecil seated himself to drink his claret and meditate. That look of Victoria's as she left the room haunted him. It was a look of approval and confidence. If she knew the truth about his life,—not only so far as Ruthanna was concerned, but all of it,—would she ever give him such a look again?

Ah! he would never risk it. His past should be dead for both of them. What need could there be for confessions? Then came the uncomfortable thought, "Suppose Victoria had things she was keeping back too?" This thought made Cecil angry, not with himself, but with the imaginary delinquent Victoria. He drank his claret at a draught and went straightway to the yellow drawing-room. Victoria looked curiously at him as he entered. He joined her at once. "I want a chat with you, Vic," he said. "Will you take a turn in the garden?"

"But it is raining," she answered, smiling.

"Then come into the conservatory."

She went with him willingly, but wonderingly. What could he mean by looking so tragical?

"Vic," he began, "do you remember telling me you might have things to regret like other people?"

"I dare say I did tell you so," said Victoria, picking a spray of heliotrope and smelling it composedly.

"I shouldn't care to find things out after we were married," Cecil remarked, a little hardly. "If there is anything to tell, it might as well be now."

"Do you imagine I have committed a murder?" she asked him, half laughing, half indignant.

"Well, not exactly," said Cecil; "but if there is anything you think you ought to tell me—"

"Cecil," began Victoria, angrily, "are *you* the man who ought to put such questions to a woman? If you want to be free of me, you can be at once."

"Don't talk so," put in Cecil, hastily, and placing his arm about her. "There can be no question of that between us. We are as much bound as we shall be when we go to church together."

"I am not so sure of that," rejoined Victoria. "I could never breathe the same air with a suspicious husband. I should go away; I should—"

"You needn't say any more," interrupted Cecil; "only I have been thinking confidences ought to come before marriage."

"So I think," said Victoria, pointedly; "and I may ask you, as I did once before, Is there nothing you ought to tell me?"

Again he hesitated. Then he told a deliberate lie.

"No; I have nothing to confess," he answered.

It was at this moment that a servant entered the blue drawing-room, and, seeing Cecil and Victoria in the conservatory, came up to them.

"There is a young man, sir," the girl said to Cecil, "who says he must see you and Miss Lascelles. He has come from the Black Country, and says you will know his name."

"What did he say his name was?" inquired Cecil.

"John Ford, sir."

Cecil's face became ghastly in a moment. He had to steady himself against the door-way. Victoria regarded him attentively.

"Take Mr. Ford to the library," said Cecil, with an effort. "Ask him if he will take some refreshment. I will be with him almost immediately." Then he turned to Victoria. "You do not need to see this man," he said. "It is impossible that he can have anything to say to you."

"In that case it is curious that he should ask to see me," replied Victoria. "Who is this John Ford, Cecil?"

"Oh, he is a young man Uncle Lane is interested in," Cecil replied, evasively.

"So he comes from Handswick, does he?" said Victoria.

"Yes."

"Then we will both see him," she said.

"But I prefer your not seeing him," rejoined Cecil.

"All the same I shall see him."

"In spite of my wish that you should not?" he inquired, coldly.

"Yes, if it comes to that," she made answer. And forthwith she left the conservatory and made her way into the hall.

Cecil's heart beat wildly. He rushed into the dining-room and poured out some neat brandy and drank it off. Then he followed his cousin to the library. John Ford must have come to plead Ruthanna's cause. He must have heard somehow about the engagement to Victoria. What unheard-of lengths the working-classes could go to on occasion!

When Mr. Calverley entered the big, gloomy library, he saw John Ford standing before Victoria. The shaded lamp did not allow his face to be distinctly seen, but Cecil noted a great and startling change in it even in the shadow. It looked ten years older. The cheeks and eyes were sunken as if after a long illness. The eyes were awfully luminous. "He looks half mad," thought Cecil. But when John spoke to him it was with a calm dignity worthy of a gentleman born. He did not use his dialect, moreover.

"I have come, sir," he began, "to tell you something you ought to know."

"Well, really," put in Cecil, irritably, "couldn't you have written? You cannot have anything important to communicate."

"Perhaps not,—to you, sir," said John, "but to some I know of, it means—everything."

"At any rate, there can be no reason for your wishing to see Miss Lascelles," Cecil rejoined, hotly.

"She must hear what I have to say," said John, still calmly: "it concerns her to know."

"Then out with your infernal news!" cried Cecil, thoroughly losing his temper. Victoria looked at him with scorn in her eyes. "Are you not forgetting yourself?" she asked him. Cecil did not reply.

"My news is soon told," said John, nervously fingering a button on his black coat, which was wet through with the rain. "It is this, sir. *Ruthanna Trent has drowned herself!*"

Cecil started, then leaned on the table; then he tried to speak, but no words came.

"She left a slip of paper for you; I have brought it. It says she forgives you; but, before God, *I never shall, Mr. Calverley!*"

"Cecil, Cecil, is this true?" said Victoria, through white lips. Cecil sank into a chair,—the one his father had died in,—and buried his face in his hands.

"No," went on John, "I can never forgive you. You did that poor child to death just for a few hours' amusement. She was happy enough before you came, and would have been a happy wife and mother some day but for you; and now she lies in the church-yard!"

As John spoke, he stretched out his hands desolately before him. Victoria stepped forward and took one of them in her own. "Oh, Mr. Ford," she said, in a choking voice, "did you love her yourself?"

John smiled a terrible smile.

"Yes, I loved her," he said. Some men use the simplest words when they feel the most strongly. John Ford was one of these.

"I do feel for you!" Victoria said, the tears starting from her eyes.

"I have said what I came to say," said John; "and there is the paper Ruthanna left for him. I will go now." And with these words he withdrew.

Victoria stepped across the room and rang the bell. She waited till she heard the hall door close; then she came and stood in all her queenly beauty before this man she had been about to marry. He still sat with his face buried in his hands.

"Cecil Calverley," she said, sternly, "you are the man who just now told me you had no confessions to make!" He did not reply.

"You are the man," she went on, "who told me a lie,—who asked me to be your wife when you had won the love of another, whom your unmanly cruelty has driven to her death! Cecil Calverley, never let me see your face again!"

With this she left the room, and went to her own apartment, sending her maid down with a message to Mrs. Calverley to the effect that she did not feel well and would not come down again that night.

"What can it mean?" said Mrs. Calverley to Violet. "Can Cecil and Victoria have quarrelled?"

"Shall I go up to Vic and find out?" asked Violet.

"Yes, do; and I will send for Cecil. It really is extraordinary. They both seemed all right at dinner."

When the servant came, in answer to Mrs. Calverley's bell, she

said that Mr. Calverley had had a visitor in the library. Mr. Calverley was still in the library, but the visitor was gone. "Do not disturb him, then," said the mother. "I will go to him myself."

It cost the widow a great deal to go to this room. She had never entered it since her husband's death. But she had learned her lesson. No one else should be lonely and in want of comfort in her house if she could render any aid. If Victoria and Cecil had indeed quarrelled, she might be able to put things right. She did not in the least connect the visitor with what seemed to have arisen.

Mrs. Calverley found Cecil just where Victoria had left him; but now he was sobbing convulsively. The mother's arms were about him in a moment, and his head was laid upon her breast. Ah, a breast that has known anguish is the one to lay one's head on when one despairs! And the widow had known anguish enough in these days of awakening. "My own boy," she said, in a voice that had never had such a tender ring before the death of the old scholar, "you will tell your mother what so troubles you?"

"Oh, mother! mother!" cried Cecil, in his agony, "I have—oh, how can I tell you?—I have acted the part of a villain,—a murderer! I wish I had never been born!"

For answer she only pressed him close to her heart. Ah! if that lonely old scholar in his grave could have had such a caress from her in those last days, it would have made his heaven.

Oh that in our weak moments there were some power outside ourselves to compel us into the right path! But no; our characters must be of our own making, and the same conditions can prove a help or a hinderance as we will it. Fortunately, there are moments when we become as little children and acknowledge our weakness and are humble. It is in these moments that we rise highest.

And now, his head pillowed on his mother's bosom, Cecil told the whole truth about Ruthanna.

"I can never win Victoria now," Cecil said to his mother when he had told her all; "but I must win back my self-respect or die! I can't go back to Cambridge. Mother, you must let me join some friends who are going to Africa,—an exploring-party. I must have change, or I shall go mad!"

The widow offered no objection. She would not stand in the way of her boy. Her heart bled for him.

Cecil went to his own room like a criminal. Seated near his writing-table, he looked long at the photograph of poor little Ruthanna; then, still holding it in hands that trembled, he knelt and prayed a wordless prayer.

Ruthanna had forgiven him; but now his greatest desire was to leave this world and fall at her feet in that other, and tell her how he loathed himself. After this he asked of God only one boon,—annihilation.

Then came the thought of Victoria,—of her generous love,—of the wrong he had done her. Then John Ford's haggard face presented itself. "Oh, the misery one selfish man can bring!" he thought. He was safe to get killed in Africa; that was one comfort.

In the mean time, Violet was with Victoria, and they were having anything but a pleasant time. Victoria did not behave in a very praiseworthy manner, possibly, but then there was something to be said on her side.

When Violet had been (ungraciously) admitted to her cousin's room, she found her busy packing. "What is this between you and Cecil?" she asked, anxiously, for now it was quite evident there had been a quarrel, otherwise why this packing?

"There is nothing between your brother and me now," Victoria answered, turning over a drawer, and sorting out things she wished to pack in particular places. She had banished the maid.

"Nothing between you and Cecil now!" exclaimed Violet, aghast. She had expected nothing so bad as this. "What has Cecil done?"

"Oh, only the something extraordinary I said he would do, and that I said you might not like when done; but I never thought it would hurt me so—so—"

Here Victoria broke off and burst into a flood of passionate weeping.

It was the first time Violet had ever seen her cousin cry. As a school-girl, even, she had never given way like this. Violet's was not a sensitive nature, as we have said, but it did move her to see Victoria broken down like this: it seemed almost like seeing a man cry; and that is one of the saddest sights on earth. She put her arms round her cousin and tried to comfort her.

"Our Church teaches forgiveness, Vic. Can't you forgive?" she said.

"Oh, I hate the Church!—and forgiveness!—and everything!" cried Victoria.

"Oh, Vic!"

"You may say, 'Oh, Vic!' You don't understand; you can't understand!"

"Well, Cecil loves you, and you will break his heart," said Violet, moving away.

"And if I did, it is well he should have a taste of what a broken heart means; but he has no heart to break."

"Oh, Vic!"

"I wish you wouldn't keep saying, 'Oh, Vic!'"

Violet found it so impossible to get on with her cousin that she withdrew in search of her brother. She found that he was in the library with his mother: so she went to her own room, with a feeling that it was possibly just as well not to have any more unpleasant interviews that night, and soon consoled herself in thoughts of her own more sensible love-affair. She and Mr. Fairbank never quarrelled in this absurd way! Neither Victoria nor Cecil was religious enough: that was at the bottom of it all.

Yet there was more religion in Cecil's agony of remorse, it may be, than in all his sister's innocent and ignorant and paltry life. It is not works that are to be our salvation, but something very different. It may be that but for the impulse given us by a fall which has been wept over, some of us would never reach heaven at all.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TRUE LOVER.

OUT into the darkness John Ford went, when his task had been performed. The rain had ceased for the time, and the stars shone out. Where was he going? He could not have told. Somewhere he must pass the hours till the early train left Longworth for London; it could not matter where. Nothing could matter to him any more. He had taken no food that day. It had never occurred to him that he had such a need till refreshment had been offered to him at Heatherdene. And then he had refused it. He could not eat that man's bread.

He wandered on towards Longworth; and the night-wind which had sprung up dried his drenched clothes. But he knew nothing of it. He thought, as the wind moaned in the pine-trees, "So it moans over her grave;" and the rustling of the dead leaves that filled his ears spoke of her. Everything spoke of her. He could no longer hear a sound that did not speak of her. He could see nothing that was not full of her. This long stretch of heather and gorse, how like it was to that which her sweet child-eyes had looked upon! These stars above him, had they not seen her wondering glances? Ah! he remembered one night—an eternity ago now—when there had been a "school-treat," and he and she had walked side by side under these stars, and he had told her the names of some of them, and she had laughed and said how much he seemed to know, and had added, innocently, "Him as I will marry mun know things like thee!" How he had yearned there and then to tell her he was hers, all her own! but he had thought she was so young, and should not leave her child-life yet. But after that how he had worked to gain the knowledge she seemed to value! Every hour of patient toil had been glorified by the thought, "These things I can tell her when she asks me."

Then the Sunday afternoons in the summers long ago came before him,—there could never be another summer for John Ford,—and he pondered on the hours passed by her side under those five mountain-ashes, which were now red with berries. Her simple questions came back to him, her sunny laughter, the gleam of her golden hair, the glad light that lived in her blue eyes. Ah! he had known all along that he loved her; but he had not known how much, till she was gone out of his life forever. He had not realized that she was in fact his life; and life without her could be but death,—that cruellest death, which still leaves the poor body to its daily toil.

John Ford wandered on till he neared the little railway-station; then a great physical weariness took possession of him, and he sought out a bank on which to stretch himself. Everywhere was wet with the rain. But all dangers to life were his friends now,—his only friends,—for might they not lead him to her? That pain which tore his breast as he lay back under the stars, that fight for breath that followed,—these were his friends. He had had this pain once before, on the day when he had first seen Ruthanna with Mr. Calverley upon the heath. But it had not been so severe then. As he lay there and

gasped, a great gladness suddenly filled his heart: it was the thought of what this pain meant. It passed, however, and then, as John Ford lay trembling and faint, he saw once more the lighted High Street at Walsall as it had been on that Saturday when Ruthanna had had her photograph taken. He was even now walking with her and Abraham beside the stalls. He could recall her laugh. Ah! he had hoped so much from that photograph, which now lay near his heart. He took it out and tried in the dim starlight to make out the dear features, but failed. He pressed it again and again to his lips, and sank into a sleep of exhaustion. Then he had a beautiful dream. He saw Ruthanna bending over him with a sweet tender calm in her eyes.

He slept on till the day broke; then he rose and continued his journey. He had a sort of apathy on him. He entered the train mechanically and was borne on to London. Equally mechanically he entered the train which was to carry him to Walsall, where he must change for Handswick. He had not broken his fast.

One or two persons who knew him saw him at Walsall; but no one spoke to him: somehow his look scared them. He entered an empty compartment alone; and as the train crawled into Handswick station Mr. Lane, who chanced to be on the platform, caught sight of him and hurried up to the carriage door to say some kind word to the poor fellow; for his heart ached for him. He did not know where he had been, or he might have felt even more.

"John," he said, kindly, opening the door and looking in, "you are not going farther, are you?"

There was no answer. John Ford sat leaning over a piece of paper on his knee, on which were some scribbled words. He was still holding the pencil between his fingers.

"John," repeated the minister, "you are not going farther, are you? The train will start if you don't be quick out."

Still no answer. Then the minister stooped and looked into his face, and an expression of horror spread over his own. It was only John Ford's body that was there. And on the scrap of paper were traced the words, "I forgive thee, Mr. Calverley."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SEEKING DEATH.

"**THERE** is no need for your going now, Victoria," Mrs. Calverley said, the morning after John Ford's visit to Heatherdene. Victoria had entered the breakfast-room in her travelling-dress, and was standing near the window, looking out with weary, sad eyes.

The widow came softly up to her and gazed sorrowfully into her face.

Presently Victoria met her eyes, and asked, "Why need I not go, Aunt Agatha?"

"Because," said the widow, with white, tremulous lips, "my son is

gone away. He left for London by the early train. He will sail for the Cape in little over a week."

Victoria shivered slightly, and two still tears fell from her dazed eyes on to her clasped hands. But she said nothing. She was in the hands of the Infinite, and her heart was being revealed to her. She had thought she knew herself before. She was now conscious that her true nature which had just awoke and confronted her in all its nakedness had been herself all along. It had only slept till sorrow should awaken it, that blessed friend sorrow, against whom we all try so hard to close the door!

In those moments of agony, Victoria felt that her love for Cecil was her one necessity. It enwrapped him, sins and all, with an ineffable tenderness. It was a spark of the divine, the eternal love which nothing could change, which must shut out pride and anger, and give all, asking nothing.

"My dear," said the widow, timidly and pleadingly (she had a very timid manner now), "I know, I know that my boy has served you badly; but try, try to forgive him. It is such a mistake not to try—"

Victoria interrupted her almost fiercely. "Aunt Agatha," she cried, "I would rather share hell with Cecil than be in heaven without him!"

For answer the widow, who had now also lost her son, took her niece to her desolate heart for good and all.

As for Cecil, mercifully for him he was in London, with little time for thinking. He had joined his friends at their hotel, and on the very first evening was engrossed with the necessarily rapid preparations for some months' sojourn in a country where every kind of difficulty and danger was pretty sure to present itself, and must be provided for, as far as might be, within a given compass. Of course in those parts of Africa where wagons could be used, limitations of baggage were comparatively unnecessary; but as at least some parts of the journey must be made in boats, or on ox-back, or possibly on foot, discrimination in the choice of luggage was essential. The presents destined for hostile tribes would prove a considerable encumbrance, consisting as they must do for the most part of things which are easily destructible,—such as looking-glasses, beads of various kinds, brass jewelry, firearms, etc. Then there was the question, not what comforts of a personal nature could be taken, but how many could be dispensed with. All this bustle and confusion was good for Cecil just now, just as the privations he was pretty certainly about to endure in his travels would be a helpful discipline should he indeed survive them. But, as we have seen, he had no desire to survive them as yet. Hurrying hither and thither in busy London streets, quiet Heatherdene seemed to the young man's mind more like a picture he had seen than a place he had actually known; and poor Ruthanna's love, despair, and death, like something he had read of somewhere. Even the Cecil Calverley of the past months seemed to his stunned consciousness unsubstantial and visionary. His present self appeared unreal. He talked and even laughed with his friends, and heard himself do so as if from outside.

It was on the evening of his second day in town that he found a letter waiting for him at the hotel. It was from Victoria, imploring him to come back ; confessing her love ; promising help and comfort. It was a womanly letter, full of healing tenderness. But to Cecil it brought only a new and awful blackness into his life. How came it that he, whose whole life had been small and selfish and vain, should have won the love of two women such as Victoria and Ruthanna ? Ah ! it had been a case of "pearls before swine." He had trampled their pure love under his feet ! Yet, even as he read and re-read the letter and cursed his folly, a dim and far-off hope came and flickered about his wretchedness, that he might still do something noble and pure before quitting this world forever ; that when in that other world he should meet the two pure women who had so loved him he should not utterly shrink from their gaze.

He took out some note-paper and sat down to write to his cousin, and, as he wrote, his friends discussed the adventures they hoped to have, and lamented that they were not likely to include a lion or two among their victims.

This is what Cecil wrote to his cousin :

"It is good and generous of you to call me back, but you were right when you bade me never to let you see my face again. Forgive me if I obey your first command rather than your second."

So Cecil Calverley went on board a mail-steamer and sailed with his friends for the Cape.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FINDING LIFE.

AUTUMN had come again, and with it had come two visitors to the minister's at Handswick. They were Mrs. Calverley and Victoria.

Never were visitors made more welcome. And the widow felt an indescribable solace in the ungrudging love her neglected sister now gave her.

One morning during breakfast the minister, as usual, unfolded his *Daily News* and read extracts from it aloud. Suddenly the paper fell from his hands. "What is the matter?" exclaimed his wife, anxiously.

"Listen," said the minister, taking up the paper again. And then he read a tale of horror and privation about an exploring-party in South Africa. The reader has heard such tales of hardship and danger before, and in nearly all there has been a special hero who has been brave and patient and unselfish. In this story too there was such a hero. And his name was Cecil Calverley.

The good minister fairly broke down and sobbed, as he read of one noble, heroic deed after another ; and it was perhaps only natural that the others should do the same.

Mrs. Calverley had heard only twice from Cecil during this year of absence, and in his letters he had never spoken of himself, but had

made light of dangers and difficulties, and been full of tender solicitude for those at home.

The minister had to take off his glasses and polish them after reading this account. Then he replaced them on his nose, and took up the paper again. A moment more, and he waved it in the air and shouted, "Hurrah!" till the small room rang again.

"They have landed in England!" he cried; "even now Cecil may have reached London!"

"Oh, I must go home at once to welcome my boy," said the widow, hurriedly; "I must go to-day." And that day she went. But Victoria remained with her aunt Isabella.

Poor Victoria! this year had been for her but one long pang. She had, she thought, known how to love before that terrible night when John Ford had come. In this year of anguish she learned that it is not love at all which can turn from the loved one in his greatest need. And the time of greatest need is that in which one has fallen and feels God-forsaken. This is love's test. It is the opportunity for poor human love to show itself indeed part of the eternal love of God. It is its opportunity to have even a part in that divinest of all schemes, redemption.

The sun was setting, and the little church-yard on the green was flooded with its light. The gray walls of the church itself were bathed in the glow, and the west window shone like gold.

The sun's faithful good-night kiss touched alike the new graves on which the turf was still brown, and the old gray stones from which winter storms had removed their record, even as the storms of life had removed all those whose eyes had read those records through their tears, and had laid them also at rest, to be in their turn forgotten.

It was near the west window that the stone which marked Ruthanna's resting-place stood, and at the foot of it was a mound sweet with autumn flowers. It had been always bright, even in the winter, for so many brought their offerings there. It was a sort of village shrine.

Here Victoria often came now, and, seated in the long grass beside the grave, read and thought. On this autumn evening she had come here and taken her accustomed place. The tall grass reached her shoulder where she sat. Her eyes looked out towards the distant hill-tops. Her hands lay lightly clasped upon her lap.

At length the clock in the gray tower chimed out, and Victoria removed her eyes from the distant hills to see a figure approaching among the graves. Her heart gave a great leap; but she did not stir. She only looked. Slowly Cecil Calverley—but, oh, how changed he looked!—made his way towards this grave. He did not see her. He only saw that white stone with the name Ruthanna illumined by the sun. Then he removed his hat and stood at a little distance, his head bowed upon his breast, as if the ground near that head-stone were too sacred to be trodden by his feet.

Long he stood so, the sad lines of his pallid face painfully emphasized in the evening glow. Then a strange, new, indescribable look

passed over his countenance, and he moved quickly towards the grave and fell on his knees there, his face buried in his hands.

It was then that Victoria arose, and, stretching out her hand across that grave, placed it—oh, so tenderly!—on the bowed head. With a sudden start he looked up and met her eyes. A look of ineffable joy spread over his worn face. This meeting of the eyes had told all. There could be no need for words; and none were spoken. But together, hand in hand, they wended their way through the church-yard, an everlasting peace filling both their hearts.

THE END.

HEROINES OF THE HUMAN COMEDY.

PROBABLY no modern author of rare genius, and great reputation abroad, is so little known to Americans as Honoré de Balzac. The scholarly are acquainted with him, of course ; but many fairly-educated persons know little more than his name, and not one in fifty has read a single volume of his works. The chief reason is that, though a novelist, his mind and method are essentially foreign to the mass of the English-speaking race ; that his stories are philosophic studies rather than dramatic recitals, and deal more with character and emotions than with plot and performance. His fame principally rests on his understanding and delineation of women, who are his greatest admirers. To many of us, English as well as Americans, it may seem that his women, in accordance with Voltaire's distinction, often represent French nature rather than human nature. French women frequently appear very different from those of Anglo-Saxon blood ; but this is doubtless due to ages of difference in education, training, and social customs. They are really very much like their sisters throughout civilization, and, albeit they have a reputation for extreme artificiality, they are, as a rule, at least after marriage, more candid and less conventional than either English or American women. In certain ways, our city-bred women have, in my opinion, more in common with Parisian women than with British maidens and matrons. But the familiar fact should be borne in mind that in general the American girl is a woman mentally before she has become a wife, and that the French girl, unless of the lower orders, is only a child, and is always treated as such. The one has her freedom before wedlock, the other after it. The happiest period of an American girl's life is usually from the time of her leaving school until she finds her husband. With a French girl, the contrary is apt to be true. She may be too ignorant before marriage, and too knowing after it ; but the intelligence of the American girl remains much the same in either case. Matrimony does not instantly unseal her eyes to the actual world, with all its selfishness, greed, and vice. The change for the French girl is plainly too great and too abrupt : she cannot digest it in so short a time. From complete unenlightenment as to real life and its larger duties, she passes suddenly into a state of high secular sophistication, and is left to battle with the newly-discovered forces of evil at her own discretion.

It should also be remembered in reading Balzac, and all French novelists, indeed, that divorce has been, until lately, unattainable, and that marriage, which with us is associated with whatever is romantic and ideal, has no such association with them. The French do not wed for love, but for personal advantage or pecuniary gain. They are affianced by their parents, and become man and wife without any acquaintance with one another. They do not object to love, naturally ; but it is always subordinate to a more practical end. The men have ordinarily done their loving previously, and expect to continue their affairs of gallantry ; while the women who have not become wives from

passion or sympathy are in constant danger of losing the hearts which their husbands have not, unless by accident, secured. And they commonly do lose their hearts, particularly in novels, in which the lover is so ever present that a French novel would seem impossible without him. Well as we know this peculiarity of French life, and especially of French fiction, we are likely to be unmindful of it, while we read, because it is so different with us. In many of Balzac's novels the lover is so prominent,—the whole story turning on him,—and the husband so unimportant, and so indifferent, that they seem unnatural to us. We can hardly help wondering how the husbands of such beautiful and charming women as Mme. de Beauséant, the Duchesse de Langeais, Mme. de Mortsau, and a score of others, can be so insensible to them as to be incapable even of jealousy. We are tempted to pronounce them not only improbable, but impossible, until we recollect that they are French. Most of Balzac's heroines are, for obvious reasons, married. The French novel begins where the American novel ends, in harmony with the different ideas of the period of romance and sentimental passion.

Balzac's women have remarkable variety and divergence. Most poets and novelists, even the best of them, seem to have but one idea of the sex, with variations. These are apt to bear a striking family likeness. The authors are either sentimental or cynical: they have theories, and air and insist on their theories in presenting and unfolding their feminine characters. The bulk of Shakespeare's women—Juliet, Ophelia, Imogen, Viola, Rosalind, Miranda—are of the love-lorn, man-worshipping class; so are Goethe's and Byron's. Henry James's and Howell's women appear to be much of the same pattern, altered, now and then, by compelling circumstance. Balzac's women are as unlike as possible, except that they usually want money, and are thinking of the seventh commandment, whether obeying or violating it. They have opposite qualities and contradictory motives: they are alien to one another as Tartars and New-Yorkers. Are not Béatrix and Saline de Grandlieu, Delphine de Restaud and Marguerite Claeës, Louise de Chaulieu and Anastasie de Nucingen, Mme. Firmiani and Diane de Maufrigneuse, Agathe Bridau and Flore Brazier, exact antipodes? Of the hundred and more feminine characters, complete portraits or mere outlines, in the Human Comedy, all are individual, and distinct as in nature. The defect of some of them, in my judgment, is that they are either too good or too bad: they need a blending of merit and demerit to be wholly human. We recoil from Valérie Marneffe as superfluously depraved, just as we grow impatient with Pierrette Lorrain for not rebelling against her persecuting cousins, who finally drive her to death. Balzac is prone to describe certain women either as angels or devils, instead of creatures of the world. What they do is natural enough, considering their temperament and surroundings,—these constitute destiny,—but they are in the extreme, which Life never is. He indicates no hypothesis of women. He portrays them as he finds them; he develops their career, and shapes their catastrophe by a remorseless logic, based on their qualities and tendencies. Although called immoral, he is so severely moral as to be at

times untrue; for he seldom allows what he considers vice to triumph in the end, freely as he permits virtue to suffer. And we all know that the final victories of vice are of daily actual occurrence. It has been said that his good women are unsubstantial, lacking flesh and blood, palpable figments of the brain, but that his bad women are vivid, forcible, terribly real, and that this shows his sympathy with the bad. I do not see this. Are not *Ève Chardon*, *Renée de Restorade*, *Baroness Hulot*, as vital as *Cousine Bette*, *Madame Chabert*, or *la Fille aux Yeux d'Or*? The bad women are unquestionably more interesting to read of,—evil is always attractive in biography,—and Balzac as an artist knew this, and had for them, therefore, a certain degree of literary admiration.

Balzac drew all his characters from observation, which was with him a wonderful faculty. They were in life long before he put them in ink. Prolific and rich as his imagination was, he never depended on it where facts and truths could be had. For every one of his women he had seen the original, and what the original did not disclose he supplied from his fertile brain, governing it inflexibly by the data he had acquired. He enjoyed the friendship of many women of intellectual and social distinction, who talked to him with perfect freedom, detailing their experiences, their thoughts, their most secret feelings. He was particularly interesting, a delightful conversationalist, steeped in magnetism, abounding in sympathy with the whole sex. He was not, as has often been charged, sensual and dissolute. On the contrary, he was temperate in his pleasures, and, without pretending to be a saint or an exemplar, was, for a complete man of the world, far from immoral. His constitution and habits guarded him from every approach to debauchery. His strongest desires were intellectual; his curiosity about human nature was intense and inappeasable.

Nothing gave him greater gratification than unreserved social intercourse with women. They seemed to regard him as a priestly confessor who would understand without need of explanation. Men of insight, breadth, trustworthiness, and charity always prove, more or less, such confessors, and Balzac was conspicuously one of those men. His memory was prodigious; his imagination readily supplied any and every deficiency, and naturally rounded out any unfinished tale. Add to this his intuitive observation, which, as he himself says, took in the external and internal at the same time. He was capable of living the life of any one on whom the faculty was employed by exchanging another's personality for his own. He could completely identify himself with any stranger he encountered in the street, at the theatre, in a café, on a railway-train, feeling the joy or sorrow, the affection or hatred, the disappointment or anger, which he heard expressed in a manner wholly remote from him. By this extraordinary vital sympathy, which was instinctive, he could lead a score of lives on the same day; and when a subject arose in his mind, he remembered all that he had read, thought, imagined, said, or heard about it, clearly and consecutively. What a marvellous power was this! How thoroughly it equipped him for inventing situations and drawing characters, particularly of women, whose speech generally leaves a distinct impression on man through the law of sexual affinity!

It enabled him to portray nearly every grade of women,—*Sylvie*, Mlle. Michonneau, and Mme. Vauquer; *La Fosseuse*, Mme. Jules, and Pauline de Villenoix; Mme. de Fériby, the Comtesse de Kergarouët, and the Duchesse de Carigliano. No doubt his sister Laure, Mme. Zulma Carraud, Mme. de Berny, Mme. de Girardin (*Delphine Gay*), Mme. Visconti, the Duchesse d'Abrantès, Mme. de Hanska, afterwards his wife, and dozens of his intimate friends, often older than himself, continually found their phrases, their emotions, bits of their biography, in his romances and novels. It could not be otherwise. Balzac imbibed from all sources; his mind reflected like a mirror; his creations were more real to him than the persons he knew most intimately. Indeed, he could scarcely distinguish between what he had observed and what he had imagined: he dwelt in a land of fancy and of dream. It is not strange that he frequently ceased to speak of his friends, saying, "Let us talk of realities,—of Séraphita, Constance Birotteau, Mlle. d'Esgrignon."

The author of the Human Comedy was one of the most peculiar of men: his temperament was, in many respects, abnormal, and his experiences were very singular, as much so as if they had been reproduced from his stories. He has no character stranger than himself, no situations more anomalous than those in which he was often placed. His personages frequently appear extravagant; but they are not more extravagant than their creator, or the persons on whom they were founded. Such a man would be spontaneously attracted to women out of the common, of marked individuality, of idiosyncratic constitution, such as formed the bases for Mme. de Beauséant, Antoinette de Langeais, or the Princesse de Blamont-Chauvry. He painted women as they unveiled themselves to him, completing their portraits with the ideal hues and contours indigenous to every artist and inseparable from his work.

The circumstances of Balzac's wooing and wedding,—a glaring incongruity in the author of "*La Physiologie du Mariage*," at once so satirical and iconoclastic,—while they are natural, appear fantastic, like many parts of his books. He had, from his first youth, longed to be famous and to be loved. At twenty-eight, after writing romances, comedies, dramas, comic operas, and printing them under assumed names, without any recognition of his talents, he produced "*Les Derniers Chouans*" as his own, and gained a foothold in the literary world. In the next six years he won eminent reputation by "*La Physiologie*," "*La Peau de Chagrin*," "*Le Colonel Chabert*," "*Eugénie Grandet*," and "*Le Médecin de Campagne*." The last, with which he had taken infinite pains, and in which he felt great pride, was read in Poland by Countess Eveline de Hanska, rich and beautiful, and so much admired that she wrote the author a letter of cordial appreciation. This led to a correspondence, and, before long, to their meeting. The lady had an invalid husband and two or three small children, but was still young and charming. She and the author seem to have had a mutual attraction from the beginning of their acquaintance, though they observed the proprieties, and the Count was also his friend. It is said that on seeing him first she was so overcome with emotion that she swooned. They exchanged frequent visits, and their attachment steadily strength-

ened. The husband dying, there was no longer any legal obstacle to their union. But Balzac was still heavily in debt, and she, probably to avoid scandal, preferred to postpone their nuptials. He was opposed to her paying off his obligations; he wished her to settle the bulk of her estate on her children,—which was generous, considering that he had been tormented with debt all his life.

Thus the years went on; they saw a good deal of one another; but at forty-eight his health had become undermined from incessant toil and excessive use of black coffee, on which he had depended for sustainment in his protracted moods of composition. At last he was financially relieved; Fortune had been finally conquered; the income from his books was large and continuous; he was famous and was loved; the world smiled; the future sparkled with joy. Then he married, as he said himself, the only woman he had loved, whom he loved more and more, and whom he should love forever. Did he not exaggerate? was he not self-deceived? At fifty, a man who has known many women, and been an indefatigable student of their hearts, particularly a man of Balzac's mould, is not likely to feel his first strong passion. But he unquestionably loved—he surely had reason to love—*Eveline de Hanska*; and with each new love, as he must early have learned, most men are apt to forget their old loves, or to believe them passing fancies, mere ebullitions of the blood. In five short months, the great human comedian, who had tried to depict every phase of life, to draw every distinctive character of France in the nineteenth century, had passed away; passed away in the golden, glowing hour of victory, with the prize wrested from Destiny in his hand. After securing what he had hoped, toiled, battled for, during thirty hard, disappointing, torturous years, and then to be robbed of it by death, in the first consciousness of its possession,—what could be more impressive, more dramatic, than this? Is there a more striking *dénouement* in any of his novels? Has he a character more individual or romantic than *Eveline de Hanska*? Is not she as much a heroine of the Human Comedy as *Julie d'Aiglemont* or *Nathalie de Manerville*? If the full truth could be reached, it might be shown that many of the women he had known are actresses in different costumes, and under borrowed names, in his great life-drama. The Human Comedy, with all its faults of manner and of matter, is compounded of reality and truth, animated with flesh and blood.

The sole question is, Are his characters, especially his women, types or only individuals? Are there any individuals, in the usually received sense? Are they not necessarily types, though types of a smaller class? Is it not presumptuous for any one to think himself actually an individual, or that he has discovered an individual? To believe so is proof of inexperience. When very young men first fall in love, as the phrase is, they imagine that the girl they love is superior to her sex, the most beautiful and bewitching of her kind, a rare exception to the whole. After they have grown older and wiser, they know that she who attracts them is attractive because she is a woman between whom and themselves there is, as they fancy, much in common. It would be impossible to unearth the most individual woman

who has not, scattered through the world, many spiritual sisters, many correlated kindred. The existence of one woman, however peculiar, presupposes and, in a measure, demonstrates the existence of other women of the same order. No specimen of humanity can be unique ; uniqueness is not the law of Nature. When Balzac met a woman, and, with his astonishing faculty of observation, gleaned from her her privacy and mystery, he put her into a safe corner of his memory, to be reproduced on occasion. Later, infused with his inexorable logic of cause and effect, and filled out with his imagination, she passed into the pages of his realistic stories. The most abnormal, the most corrupt actress in the Human Comedy has her counterparts in life, and Balzac had seen her in nature before copying her into a book. It may not be pleasant to think of the Girl with the Golden Eyes, or of Anastasie de Nucingen ; but such women still live in France, in every country,—are not nearly so rare as they would seem.

Balzac was deeply impressed with the power which woman exercises for good or evil. Nearly all his men are strongly influenced by her ; she is apt to make or mar their destiny ; she is their sentimental and passionnal divinity. He was, despite his Swedenborgian and transcendental theories and rhapsodies, as expressed in "*Séraphita*" and "*Louis Lambert*," a sound Roman Catholic, at bottom. He conceives that, as a Catholic novelist, he has inestimable advantage over Protestant writers of fiction. The Protestant woman, he says, has no ideal. She may be amiable, self-sacrificing, virtuous ; but in love she lacks freedom of thought, intensity of emotion ; her love, calm and chilly, is regulated by a sense of duty. In the Protestant creed, a woman who has fallen has no hope, no future ; but, in the Catholic Church, she has expectation of pardon ; and this sustains her in trial, and exalts her life. Thus it happens that the Protestant fictionist has but one woman to present, while the Catholic has an ever-changing woman with infinite possibilities. However this may be, it will be readily conceded that Balzac needs all the advantage which he imagines to exist in favor of Catholicism, so far as delineating feminine characters is concerned. If he had had to deal in his stories with Protestant women, who, as he says, once fallen, have no future, the Human Comedy would have been reduced to very few volumes. His heroines have so many, so picturesque, so apparently palliative, if not excusable, ways of transgressing their matrimonial vows,—all owing to the peculiarity of connubial customs in France,—that their transgressions present remarkable variety, and are condoned on the ground of sentiment and romance.

What would French novelists do, I wonder, without the seventh commandment, the infraction of which plays as important a part with them as ante-nuptial love does with our novelists ? Indeed, the two things are much the same as respects motive, and the machinery of fiction, since love is not in France, as here, the incentive to marriage. Consequently, our conventional notions and our social ethics are radically dissimilar to those of the French. They pardon the wife who has a lover, so long as she is true to him. She is dishonored and condemned only when she is culpable of a second disloyalty. They

believe, as we do, in woman's fidelity to one man; but that man is not, as with us, the husband. How much better it seems, how much trouble, suffering, and tragedy it would save, to begin with the right man!

Balzac is like his kind. Many of his women, portrayed as amiable, lovable, fascinating, are false wives,—their falsity being, to his mind, but a peccadillo. He does not make them false, however, as some of his brother novelists do, to administer to prurient taste, but to furnish strong situations, to illustrate passion, and to analyze character. He is a painter of French manners of the time, and to omit therefrom unfaithful wives would be recreant to his assumptions. Still, he, like most of his compatriots, does not regard as sin in women what we should; or, at least, he considers venial what we should consider unpardonable.

The French do not set such store by one virtue as to count, in its absence, all other virtues of small consequence. That is the Anglo-Saxon judgment, as puritanic as it is unjust, since we apply it to one sex only. We differ from the French so widely that we speak of French morals, meaning no morals at all; and they, on the other hand, think us hard, narrow, hypocritical, and no better for our concealment of the truth. They, at least, do not shut their eyes to social evils, which, as everybody knows, permanently prevail; nor do they refrain from introducing them into fiction, supposed to be a picture of life. We, on the contrary, ignore them so inflexibly as facts and in literature as to indicate our belief that continuation of the pharisaic course will eventually destroy them. Neither they nor we have any hope of hastily regulating public or private immorality; but they think that its recognition tends to its gradual abatement. They do not demand that men and women, whether actual or imaginary, shall be sinless, but that they shall preserve the *bienéances*, which with them is a high social virtue. Much of their life and literature is governed by the obligation which that ever-recurring word imposes. It seems almost as if they permitted the violation of everything but decorum. Balzac's worst women invariably observe the *bienéances*. If we should meet them, as we probably have done, under different names, in the Boulevards or the Champs-Élysées, we should never suspect their wickedness.

The worst woman in the entire Human Comedy is Valérie Marneffe, in "La Cousine Bette." She is as beautiful as she is bad, as rapacious as she is captivating. The author seems to have taken great pleasure in the contrast between her physical charm and her moral deformity, as artistic minds are wont to do. They admire the glossy hide, the graceful crouch, of the tiger in his jungle; the rich blossom of the poison-plant; the shining coil and glittering eye of the deadly serpent. The same sort of fascination a man is apt to feel for the diabolically alluring Valérie, even after knowing her thoroughly. No marvel that she ensnared him, when he saw only her face, her form, her seductive manner. No one could believe her so depraved, often as he might have heard her private history. Balzac was evidently very fond of her,—he must have met her original,—yet he sacrificed her, as he said, to the cause of morality. Why should he not, since he sacri-

ficed so many of the best women to their own goodness? Although Valérie has scarcely a redeeming trait, she has her parallels in humanity, though, happily, she is not representative of her sex. Balzac himself pronounced her a monster, but denied that she was a creation of his. Having found her, he put her into his gallery of portraits. One need not have a wide experience to discover such a creature; but, once discovered, she is likely to be remembered. The cases of Valérie Marneffe are, fortunately, sporadic. Nature, who appears to revel in contrariety, rejoices often to clothe a hideous soul in an attractive body, and an attractive soul in a hideous body.

"La Cousine Bette," one of the very last of Balzac's stories in the order of composition, though not of the later arrangement, is also one of the most repulsive. If they were all like it, strong and vivid as it is, they would well deserve to be called the Dupuytren Museum of Morbid Anatomy. Nearly every character in this book is revolting; Valérie's the most so. She has no excuse for her viciousness. Married to a man as unprincipled and corrupt as herself, they are both bent on getting out of the world whatever they can, reckless of the means. She is a brigand in petticoats, whose personal charms are her fatal weapon. She is the embodiment of sordidness and debasement. She sins without temptation, yields without desire. She entraps and robs men by appealing to their senses, in whose intoxication she does not share. Like so many of Balzac's personages, she always wants money, money, money, for which she is willing to barter anything and everything evil in her possession. She keeps her lovers by remaining cool when they are at white heat. While they rave of passion, she is calmly devising some new scheme for cajoling and swindling them. The manner in which she holds and dupes them, almost in the face of ocular evidence of her guilt, betrays her marvellous shrewdness, her understanding of men. For some of her victims, like the utterly licentious Baron Hulot, one feels no pity. They are matched against their own order, and overmatched, as bad men are apt to be by bad women. At the end, Valérie, having done all the mischief she can, and having disclosed a many-sided depravity, receives her desert in the form of a loathsome death. Yet she does not suffer as some of his saintly women do, which is Balzac's way of showing the cruel injustice of the world. He neither draws nor enforces morals. He claims to be a social historian, and to teach the lessons of life, be they what they may.

As an offset to Valérie Marneffe, Mme. de la Chanterie, in the story of the same name, may be presented. She is absolutely without flaw; indeed, she is exasperatingly good, because she reflects by excess of virtue on the most amiable and lovable of her sex. She seems one of the least real of Balzac's characters, albeit such characters exist not infrequently, and one of them at least was revealed to him. They are rather superhuman than human, though humanity often appears *un-human*, because we will judge of it generally, and by hypothesis. Mme. de la Chanterie is the personification of faith, hope, and charity. No amount of wrong, cruelty, or persecution can incite her to doubt or resentment. Everybody mistreats and outrages her. Heaven, in which she devoutly believes, is as deaf to her prayers as mortals are

insensible to her angelic qualities. Man and nature appear to be in a grand and monstrous conspiracy against her. In every relation of life, as daughter, wife, and mother, she is made wretched; but the more wretched she is, the more she trusts humanity and God, and hugs to her heart the mockery of final compensation. She always returns good for evil, and stifles the consciousness of her own woes by striving to alleviate the woes of her fellows. She must strike the Roman Catholic mind as the Madonna of women.

Rosalie de Watteville, in "*Albert Savarus*," is the heiress of Besançon, a young woman of remarkable force of will and character, who allows nothing to stand between her and her wishes. *Savarus* is a man of noble character and intense feeling, who has fallen in love with *Francesca Soderini*, the *Duchesse d'Argaiolo*, the duke being a very old man. The fact of her marriage would ordinarily be no obstacle to the progress of their affection,—for she returns *Albert's* passion,—but she is prudent and self-contained. Such is not the rule with Balzac's heroines of the rich and fashionable sort; but, being an Italian, though a princess by birth, she varies from the French standard. She gives her lover reason to hope; for a few years will, in the course of nature, make her a widow. With such expectation he is content. He writes her sentimental letters, and impatiently awaits the death of the duke and the possession of the beautiful duchess. At this juncture, Rosalie hears *Savarus* highly praised, and soon after sees him without speaking to him, and straightway becomes violently enamoured. Being shrewd and enterprising, she learns much about his affairs and intents,—among other things, of his devotion to *Francesca* and his resolve to love or wed no one else. Thereupon she determines to deprive him of his connubial prospects in that quarter. She manages to intercept his correspondence; she opens and reads the letters that pass between him and the duchess, and she counterfeits his hand. She has the disposition and the cunning of a detective; she secures agents for her dishonorable service. Apprised of the death of the aged husband, she informs his widow of the approaching marriage of *Savarus* to *Mlle. de Watteville*. The widow writes to her constant, patient lover these words, "You are free. Farewell!" Her pride is so hurt, her will so resolute, that in due time she listens to the appeals of another man, who has long adored her, and becomes the *Duchesse de Rhétore*. Her heart-broken, hope-wrecked *Albert* enters the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse, never to recross the threshold, never again to hold communion with the world.

Rosalie, having ruined the peace of two lives without helping her own, is bent on further vengeance. She determines to see the duchess and inform her of her own iniquity, knowing that this will fill her mind with lasting remorse. Accordingly she leaves home for Paris, where the Italian is staying. She meets her there; puts into her hands a full written confession of her guilt, saying, "I will not be the only one to suffer. We have been very cruel to one another." The duchess instinctively understands the terrible truth, and her sudden change of countenance shows it. Rosalie stays a moment to feast her eyes on the despairing expression of the woman she has betrayed, and leaves Paris

forever. She returns to Besançon ; refuses repeated offers of marriage ; periodically goes to look at the walls of the Grande Chartreuse, in which the man for whose love she has vainly committed one of the greatest of crimes is voluntarily immured for life. Several years after her memorable visit to Paris, she is travelling on the Loire. The boilers of the boat explode ; she is horribly injured, losing an arm and a leg, and receiving other wounds from which she continually suffers. She dwells in seclusion, and consecrates herself to the duties of charity and religion. Is not this the portrait of a certain kind of woman ?

But how could the bewitching Francesca Soderini, whose love for Albert is described as a lasting rapture, so quickly have quenched the raging flame in her heart ? Did she quench it ? Did it not consume her at last ? Who knows ? Balzac does not attempt to tell ; he offers only a faint suggestion. Is he not an artist in this, a true delineator of feminine nature ? There are vagaries, sudden revolutions in women which man cannot understand, perhaps not they themselves. Balzac must leave something to the imagination ; and he wisely leaves to it the cause of the gradual and final change of the charming duchess. She was so beautiful and fascinating—this exaggeration is a fault of his women, due doubtless to his idealism—that one can scarcely help thinking of her, as indeed of most of his characters, long after one has closed the book. A peculiarity of the Human Comedy is that its women, many of whom may seem strange, abnormal, at first, grow more and more natural and life-like with our development and experience.

Junius Henri Browne.

WHERE LIES THE LAND?

RONDEAU.

WHERE lies the land ? I asked, in sorrow drowned,—
Tell me, I pray, where the enchanted ground

That knows not weary heart, nor aching head,

Nor wild regret, nor sore and anxious dread,
And I will seek it to earth's utmost bound.

Here my voice faltered,—dropped to faintest sound :
A whisper startled me, and, looking round,

I heard an echo mocking me, which said,

Where lies the land ?

My eyes then caught a little grass-green mound,
With pure white roses and with lilies crowned,

That sweetest fragrance all around them shed ;

And as I looked upon that quiet bed,
Full answer to my question I had found,

Where lies the land ?

Charles D. Bell.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A STUMP SPEAKER.

FROM the period of my earliest recollection I was a zealous partisan. Most of my school-boy quarrels related to the respective merits and demerits of the two great parties and their candidates. Long before I had attained my majority I had the temerity to undertake, upon the stump, to enlighten my fellow-citizens upon their duties as voters.

One of my early speeches came about in this wise. A large party of academy students, of whom I was one, attended a mass-meeting which, though nominally Republican, was really held in the interest of a Democratic legislative candidate. There was a contest over the location of the county-seat, and the managers of this meeting had entered into a compact with the Democratic candidate, whereby, in exchange for votes, he agreed to support their measures. A mere youth at school, I was, of course, not in their confidence. When we arrived upon the scene a local statesman was haranguing the crowd. As soon as he concluded, to my utter surprise and consternation, for I was wholly unprepared to speak, my companions, every mother's son of them, began to yell out my name. I slunk out of sight behind the platform, but it was of no use. As soon as there was a lull, the chairman attempted to introduce another speaker, but those yelling school-boys would not permit it, and they began to howl for me as though all the imps from pandemonium had broken loose. Seeing no way to avoid it, the managers of the meeting hustled me upon the platform and forward to speak. I was told to be brief, and I readily promised to be so, for I really felt that I had nothing to say. With no attempt to disguise his displeasure, the chairman introduced me by saying that, as there were present a number of *well-known* and *eloquent* speakers, who had been *invited* to take part in the meeting, I would be brief. Since then I have had some pretty difficult tasks, but never a harder one than the beginning of that speech. However, the school-boys, who formed a large part of the audience, were overflowing with enthusiasm, and my remarks were punctuated with abundant applause. Having little to say, I said it noisily and verbosely. On this occasion the truth of Story's lines was perfectly illustrated:

Loose declamation may deceive the crowd,
And seem more striking as it grows more loud,
But sober sense rejects it with disdain,
As naught but empty noise, and weak as vain.

As I went on, the uneasiness upon the platform became quite as marked as the enthusiasm among the crowd, and both were increased when, without knowledge of anything to the credit or disparagement of either, I pronounced a fulsome eulogy upon the candidate whom the meeting was called to oppose, and then bitterly denounced the one it was called to support; and especially when I condemned, in unmeasured terms, all disloyalty to party nominees, and called upon my hearers to give the whole ticket a loyal and hearty support. When I closed,

there went up, synchronously, from the platform a sigh of relief and from the audience a hearty cheer.

From that meeting I returned silent and mortified, feeling that I had occupied half an hour which belonged to other speakers, and that I should not have permitted myself to speak until I had something of importance to say and had learned better how to say it.

Notwithstanding that unsatisfactory experience, I continued, for a number of years, to make occasional political speeches. It was not until 1878 that I was regularly sent out by the State Committee. During the campaign of 1880 I made upwards of eighty speeches, and I have been equally active in all succeeding municipal and State campaigns.

While campaigning, one meets many queer characters and is likely to have many interesting experiences. The relating of some such experiences is the chief purpose of this article.

When it is intended to have a mass-meeting and a parade on the same evening, the managers are always in a state of great excitement until they have secured the attendance of at least half a dozen speakers, all of whom are bubbling over with eloquence. Then the parade is continued until far into the night, late enough for honest folk to be abed. After great effort, however, a part of the crowd is gathered about the speakers' stand and the meeting organized. Before the first speaker gets warmed up to his subject, a brass band, belonging to one of the visiting clubs, begins to play, the members of the club are gathered together, and away they march to the music of the fife and drums. Meantime, to prevent his voice from being drowned by the noise, the speaker is screaming like an eagle, or roaring like a bull of Bashan, according to the quality of his voice. This continues until the crowd has dwindled to a baker's dozen, when the meeting breaks up, most of the speakers not having had a chance to pour forth their bottled-up eloquence, though before the meeting their presence was considered indispensable. I have had experiences of this kind so often, sometimes after travelling long distances to reach the meetings, that of late I always advise against anybody being sent to a meeting that is to be preceded by a parade, because every speaker sent is almost sure to contribute one to that most useless and troublesome of accumulations, "the surplus."

Another curious thing about the management of out-of-door meetings is that, if possible, the speakers' stand is placed near a railroad, so that the orators must compete with the noise of passing trains and the whistling of locomotives. The managers rarely appreciate the advantage of setting the platform against a building, so that the structure may act as a sounding-board. These platforms, which should never exceed two feet in height, are generally far too high. I remember an occasion on which I spoke to a large audience, from a perch in a sort of tower, very elaborately built for the occasion, with the floor at least ten feet above the heads of the audience. The effort to project my voice downward from such an altitude, so as to be heard by the entire crowd, was extremely severe. My throat still aches, sympathetically, when I recall the tremendous effort I had to make, and I can fancy that the sound-waves then set in motion may yet be careering somewhere in the limitless regions of space.

One often sees a good deal of human nature exhibited among speakers at these meetings, especially in their selfish eagerness to be called on first, so as to make the principal speech. This they often prolong to the extent of crowding others out. I have been so disgusted with exhibitions of this kind that of late years it has been my almost invariable rule to ask to be placed last on the list. Once, during a recent municipal campaign, while I was speaking, one of the best stump speakers in the State came into the hall. He had just come from another great meeting, where he had made a stirring address, which he was anxious to repeat. On taking a seat upon the stage he asked his neighbor, speaking in his ordinary tone of voice, how long I had been speaking. Presently he said, "I wonder how long he will keep it up!" A few minutes later he growled, "He talks as if he had hot mush in his mouth!" Presently he added, "The audience are tired of him. They want to hear me." With this sort of a fire of comment going on in my rear, I soon closed, wishing I had his talent, half inclined to covet his self-esteem, and certainly not flattered by the opportunity to see myself as I was seen by this accomplished orator. Since that time I have doubted the wisdom of the wish expressed in Burns's lines,—

Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ousels as ither see us!

Sometimes one meets with experiences of another, and scarcely less unflattering, kind. I once went to speak in a flourishing town in the interior of the State. On alighting from the train I saw three elegant coupés waiting near the station. Immediately a tall, fine-looking man approached me, and asked,—

"Is this Senator Hughes?"

On my answering in the affirmative, he quickly asked whether Mr. — (naming a very popular and accomplished orator) was on the train. When I answered that he was not, and would not be at the meeting that night, the faces of the half-dozen committeemen present became perceptibly elongated. To borrow a phrase from Tennyson, they made "downward crescents" of their mouths. All this, though by no means flattering to my vanity, was highly amusing, and it was with difficulty that I refrained from laughter. They then showed me a telegram from another prominent speaker stating that he had missed the train and could not be present. They had expected the train to bring them three speakers, two of them men of distinction as orators. Instead only one had come, and he was practically unknown to them. A more thoroughly disappointed set of men it would be hard to find, though, with the good breeding of gentlemen, they strove, but ineffectually, to conceal their chagrin. One of them, whose anxiety could not be restrained, asked me if I had done much speaking during the campaign. I gave him no encouragement, answering, carelessly, that I had spoken a few times.

Their anxiety was justified by the character of the meeting. I have never seen a finer audience than the one gathered in the court-house that night. Fortunately, something in the occasion seemed to call forth

my best efforts, and my speech came as near to satisfying me, both in manner and matter, as any I ever made. Having the whole evening to myself, I was not stinted in time, and when, after talking for an hour and three-quarters, I sat down, I felt that I had made a logical argument and had won the approval of the audience. The meeting over, the committee escorted me to the hotel, and one of them said,—

"We don't mind telling you now that we were awfully disappointed this afternoon when we found that you were to be our only speaker; but, since the meeting, we are glad the others did not come."

I thanked him, of course, for so fine a compliment, but told him truthfully that the success of the meeting was largely due to their own efforts and to the character of the audience, and that had the others been present it would doubtless have been still more successful.

The speaker who desires to be thoroughly successful as a general stumper must be able to adapt himself to his audiences. I once addressed a meeting in one of the mining towns of Pennsylvania, where at first the crowd was completely unresponsive. I told some of my best stories without exciting more than the merest ripple of laughter, put in my strongest logic without provoking signs of assent, and, as a last resort, set off my finest pyrotechnics, without awakening a cheer. With all this effort I had wrought myself into a profuse perspiration, and felt my collar hanging about my neck like a wilted cabbage-leaf. Reflecting that I was among plain, honest folk, who cared very little about fashion and fine dress, I begged that they would pardon me for removing my collar, saying that when one attempted to thrash the Democracy his effort ought not to be impeded by unnecessary clothing. This took the crowd by storm. From every part of the hall went up wild and uproarious applause. After that I had no reason to find fault with the impassiveness of the audience. After the meeting a club was formed, and the next evening they marched, four hundred strong, to a neighboring town where I spoke. It was that shirt-collar that did it.

To succeed upon the stump one must feel himself master of the situation; he must thoroughly understand the questions at issue, be well versed in the political history of the country, and be a walking encyclopædia of information, facts, and statistics upon business and economic questions. He must be ready and prompt to give an honest answer, and, if possible, one favorable to his cause, to every question which may be put to him by the honest seeker after information. He must be prompt with keen wit to squelch the first interruption of a wily antagonist, who, under the guise of asking questions, attempts to involve him in controversy. He must be equally ready and firm to crush, with sledge-hammer blows, the ruffian who interrupts him with vulgar denunciation and abuse.

An instance of how an audience may be won with very cheap wit at the expense of an interrupter occurred at a meeting which I addressed in the western part of the State during the campaign of 1878, when the key-note was "honest money." Referring to the Greenback heresy, I illustrated what I was saying by alluding to the ravages of rats among the Pitcairn Islanders, and to the law passed by their assembly making it punishable with death to kill a cat, and said that had that as-

sembly been composed of Greenbackers they would have resolved to exterminate rats by having printed upon slips of paper, "This is a cat."

A long-haired man arose in the audience, complained of this illustration as unfair, and asked if he might "catechise me a little on the money question." I answered that he might, provided he would agree beforehand to *ratify* my answers. The old man was innocent of any intention of making a pun, and I doubt if to this day he knows what the audience laughed at, and, indeed, I can see but little reason for their laughter myself.

In the campaign of 1880, on the evening after we had received the disastrous news of the election in Maine, I was speaking to a large audience, and in the midst of my speech, while I was pouring some pretty hot shot into the opposition, one of the Democratic leaders in the town arose, and, in a smooth, insinuating tone of voice, said,—

"Won't the gentleman kindly tell us the news from Maine?"

It was a critical moment. I must wrest the incident to my advantage, or it would be a wet blanket thrown over the audience, spoiling all the enthusiasm the meeting was intended to create.

"Yes, my Democratic friend," I answered, "your desire for information does you credit. This is the news from Maine: the Republicans got the House of Representatives, the Senate, two Congressmen, and a United States Senator; the Greenbackers got two Congressmen and the Governor; the Democrats got—drunk,—'only that and nothing more.'"

The storm of applause which arose from the audience was too much for my antagonist. He had kept his feet until the cheering, stamping, and hand-clapping arose like a thunder-gust; then, seeing himself in a minority of one, he subsided. There was, of course, nothing in the answer except the unexpected close, but it accomplished its purpose, caught the crowd, and sent the enthusiasm up to fever-heat.

On another occasion I felt myself justified in using harsher language. I was discussing the tariff, as best I could, from the stand-point of the interests of labor. I noticed in the crowd a rough-looking man edging his way towards the platform. At last he looked up at me, and, in a coarse, brutal voice, with a profusion of oaths, said,—

"What right have you to speak for labor? I'll bet you never did any work in your life."

"There you are mistaken," I responded. "I have done some pretty hard work, as an attorney, in trying to keep scoundrels like you out of the penitentiary."

It was a bull's-eye hit, for, as I afterwards learned, he had but a short time before been released after having served a term in the county jail.

The manner in which staid and serious men are often carried away by enthusiasm in exciting political campaigns is not a little remarkable. During the contest of 1884 I addressed a meeting composed almost wholly of Scotch-Irishmen, members of the United Presbyterian Church, a denomination whose strict observance of the Sabbath is well known. The chairman of the meeting was a clergyman of that denomination; the time, Saturday night. It was after eleven o'clock

when I was introduced as a Philadelphian, sent out by the State Committee, who would make a short speech. All the previous part of the night had been taken up by local speakers, one of whom had occupied over two hours, although I had ridden four hundred miles by rail, and driven twenty miles through a cold wind, to get there. It was near the end of that memorable contest, and the excitement was at fever-heat. The telling of one or two humorous stories, and the letting off of some perfervid oratorical fireworks, wrought the audience up to a high pitch of enthusiasm. I, myself, was carried away by the excitement, and forgot to note the lapse of time. On looking at my watch I was astonished to see it on the very turn of twelve.

"In another minute," I said, "it will be the witching hour of midnight, and with that comes the Sabbath day. As good citizens we will obey the human, and as Christians the divine, law to keep holy the Sabbath day."

"Never mind about the Sabbath," cried the venerable clerical chairman: "go on with the good work!"

For most audiences, into every long speech there should be sandwiched a moderate amount of humor and fun. A new story, aptly illustrating a point made, is a common expedient, and, when well told, is very effective.

Speaking out of doors is generally regarded as injurious to the health and destructive to the vocal organs, but, except in the case of speaking against strong, cold winds, or in damp misty weather, I have not so found it. My health has generally improved during campaigns, and my voice has grown stronger and richer with daily use.

A few rules may be laid down in small space, which, if carefully followed, will be of great use to the open-air speaker:

Never drink cold water while speaking, no matter how thirsty you may be. The sudden shock to the overheated and delicate organs of the throat produces congestion and injures the voice.

When suffering from hoarseness, refrain from speaking altogether.

When not speaking, keep up a daily breathing and vocal exercise.

Pitch your voice below, rather than above, its natural key.

Let your articulation be perfect, every letter sounded, and every sound formed with force and precision.

Speak less rapidly than you would do in-doors, and keep the lungs constantly inflated.

Remember that the orator is like a gun-barrel, which must be straight, must have a bore as large as the bullet, and must have the powder below the ball.

Project the sound-waves in the proper direction, just as you would aim a bullet at the mark.

The observance of these rules will, I believe, enable any vigorous man, with ordinary vocal powers, to speak daily to large audiences, in the open air, without injury to his health or his voice.

As time goes on, a decided improvement in the taste and temper of audiences is distinctly noticeable. Amusing nonsense, personal abuse, and forensic fireworks are much less in demand than formerly. Among

the entire list of public speakers in this State, I can think of but one who has attained great popularity purely from the manner of his delivery, without putting any solid meat in his speeches ; and his popularity is decidedly waning. The general spread of intelligence, due in large measure to the universal circulation of the daily press, has produced a marked effect. To hold public attention and wear as a speaker, one must have something serious to say, and he must say it with due regard to decency and propriety. I do not mean that vulgarity, abuse, and buncombe are eliminated from the platform, but the intelligence and manliness of American audiences are making them less and less welcome there. The stump speaker, from the very nature of the case, must be an advocate, but he is also becoming more and more an educator. I do not set a very high value upon the mass meeting as a means of proselyting voters ; but I do regard it as one means of stimulating thought, and, therefore, as possessing some educational value. It is likely, I think, to become, in the future, a forum for the free discussion of public questions, and thus to increase in importance, rather than fall into decadence.

B. F. Hughes.

A PHILOSOPHER IN THE PURPLE.

THE eighteenth century was probably fuller in its purely intellectual life than any other century in English history. It could not, it is true, lay claim to such a brilliant galaxy of writers as adorned the age of Elizabeth, when the world's greatest poet was surrounded by luminaries second only in genius to himself. But if the poetic glory of the sixteenth century is unapproachable in its intensity, the eighteenth is as certainly distinguished for the wonderful variety and complexity of its intellectual interests and developments. It witnessed, in poetry, the versatile work of Pope, and closed with the dawning of the powers of Wordsworth ; it furnished a marvellous array of wits, beginning with Gay and ending with Sheridan ; it witnessed the rise of the English novel with Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson ; in the senate it saw a matchless array of orators, of whom Chatham, Pitt, and Fox were the chief ; science was reborn under Newton, and surgery under Hunter ; in philosophy Berkeley, Hume, Adam Smith, and others gave a new impetus to thought ; in the domain of history Gibbon, the greatest of all English and perhaps of all historical writers, flourished ; while as regards military and naval enterprise the achievements of Marlborough and Nelson drew forth the admiration of the world.

Upon this marvellous century, with its vast possibilities and activities, looked out the youthful eyes of Philip Dormer, fourth Earl of Chesterfield. To this century, indeed, he belonged, for he was only six years of age when it began its course. He lived to make his mark both as a diplomatist and as a writer ; but, while his talents in the former direction were the more conspicuous during his lifetime, posterity knows him almost alone as an imitable letter-writer. For a century past Chesterfield has suffered a considerable amount of obloquy because he

had the misfortune to offend that Grand Turk of literature, Dr. Samuel Johnson. There was probably a little wrong on both sides in that celebrated quarrel ; and Chesterfield was not a man, perhaps, to attract the love of anybody ; he was cold, proud, self-contained,—making few errors because he was not warm and impulsive enough by nature. Posterity, however, should endeavor to be just to all persons who have earned distinction in the past, and it is possible that a work recently published under the editorship of the Earl of Carnarvon* may do something towards reversing, or at least modifying, the harsh verdict generally passed upon that man-of-the-world philosopher, Lord Chesterfield. The Letters which now see the light are very remarkable, and they are preceded by an excellent memoir, which is full without being overflowing, just without being fulsome.

Throughout the whole reign of George II. Chesterfield was a prominent figure at court, in society, and in politics. His life, in fact, spanned a remarkable period. In his early youth he had known Danby and Montague, the statesmen of the Revolution ; on one occasion he had seen Richard Cromwell give evidence in a court of law ; he acted either with or against all the great public men of his time,—Bolingbroke, Walpole, Pulteney, Carteret, Pitt ; he was intimate with all the greatest men of letters,—Addison, Swift, Pope, Gay, Johnson ; he knew Montesquieu and Voltaire ; he began his life in the reign of William and Mary, and lived long enough into the reign of George III. to witness the beginning of the struggle with the American Colonies ; and he foretold the French Revolution, the extinction of Poland, and the fall of the temporal power of the Pope. This was a varied career and marked by many important domestic and foreign events. In 1715, some time after he had left Cambridge, and being then in his twenty-first year, Chesterfield became Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber to the Prince of Wales, and entered the House of Commons for the now extinct borough of St. Germans. Succeeding his father in the title in 1726, Chesterfield looked for high promotion after the death of the king, for he had always sided with the Prince of Wales in the royal quarrels ; but he was not treated with much favor even after George I. died. He was sent as ambassador to the Hague, and he acted with judgment in this post until the year 1732. The Garter was bestowed upon him, and for some time he was Lord Steward, but, not being a pliable politician, he fell into disfavor with Walpole, whose famous Excise scheme he opposed. Dismissed from office, he now became one of Walpole's most powerful opponents. He further fell into disgrace at court, and the king demanded his resignation as Lord Steward. Chesterfield now married Melusina de Schulemberg, who was supposed to be the daughter of George I., and who was nominally the niece of the Duchess of Kendal. Whether this marriage improved his personal relations with the king does not appear, but it certainly made no difference in his hostility to the government.

* Letters of Philip Dormer, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield, to his Godson and Successor. Edited from the Originals, with a Memoir of Lord Chesterfield, by the Earl of Carnarvon. Second edition, with Additional Correspondence. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1890.

In 1737 Lord Chesterfield made a magnificent speech against the Playhouse Bill. Four years later he went abroad, and at Avignon met Ormonde, with whom, it is said, he endeavored to concert measures for a Jacobite combination against Walpole. Declining to join Carteret, and excluded from office under Pelham's administration, he remained in opposition, directing his attacks chiefly against the employment of Hanoverian troops and the foreign policy of Carteret. But all things come to him who waits, and in 1744—the king having to some extent overcome his antipathy to him—Chesterfield was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The government of Ireland has always been a difficult problem, but Chesterfield's brief rule was distinguished for "clear wisdom and administrative capacity." Ireland had rest for a time, and when at the close of his viceroyalty Chesterfield said farewell, "persons of all ranks and religions followed him to the water's edge, praising and blessing and entreating him to return. No ruler was ever more easy of access, more free from the least shadow of corruption, more ready to reward merit, more indulgent when indulgence was safe, more firm when firmness was necessary." Yet for Scotland he had nothing but vindictive language, and he actually wrote to the Duke of Newcastle recommending those barbarous methods towards the rebels which were common after Monmouth's rising in the west of England. He governed Ireland wisely and leniently, but at one time he would have crushed Scotland ruthlessly and remorselessly.

Before going over to Ireland, Chesterfield was sent for a second time to Holland, where he was successful in his negotiations, and induced the Dutch to despatch troops to the campaign which terminated in the battle of Fontenoy. In 1746 he was appointed Secretary of State, and aimed at governing the king through his mistress, Lady Yarmouth; but, finding that he could make no progress in bringing about a peace, he resigned in 1748. He was still heard in Parliament, however, and in 1751 proposed and carried out the reformation of the calendar. The Old Style was eleven days in error, and it had long since been abandoned by most civilized nations. Through the efforts of Chesterfield, England now adopted the New Style, and the solar year and the lunar year were made to coincide; but the change met with a good deal of ignorant opposition, and it became quite an election-cry, "Give us back our eleven days." In 1757 Chesterfield rendered a signal service to his country by negotiating between Pitt and Newcastle during the intrigues which led to the formation of the great ministry known by their names. From this time forward the prospect gradually darkened for Lord Chesterfield. His natural son, Philip, on whom he had lavished all his affection and all the tenderest care, deceived and disappointed him. It was to him that he had addressed his famous Letters to his Son, on which his literary fame largely rests. Young Philip died in 1768, at a comparatively early age. Life now seemed for a time desolate and cheerless to Chesterfield, but a new interest was evoked by his formal adoption of his godson, Philip Stanhope, whom he had already acknowledged as his heir. He charged himself with his education, and regarded him as heir not only to his title and property, but also to his affections. He faithfully endeavored

to discharge the new task which he had undertaken, but he was not destined to complete it, for he was himself called away on the 24th of March, 1773, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

By many of his contemporaries Lord Chesterfield was regarded as unequalled for variety of talents, brilliancy of wit, and elegance of conversation. He took high rank as a diplomatist, and, though as a statesman he was never inspired by a lofty patriotism, his policy was yet humane, liberal, and far-sighted. Lord Stanhope has indicated his serious defects in his want of generosity, his unjustifiable dissimulation, and his looseness of religious principles. He was accused of committing a breach of morality by the Letters to his Son, which Johnson described as teaching "the morals of a courtesan and the manners of a dancing-master." Without defending the grave lapses of the Letters, this was far too sweeping a condemnation. Sainte-Beuve remarked that the Letters, which contain a whole world of *savoir-vivre* and worldly science, "are interesting in this particular, that there has been no idea of forming a model for imitation; they are simply intended to bring up a pupil in the closest intimacy. In applying himself to the formation of his son, Lord Chesterfield has not given us a treatise on duty, as Cicero has, but he has given us Letters which, by their mixture of justness and lightness, by certain lightsome airs which insensibly mingle with the serious graces, preserve the medium between the Grammont Memoirs and *Télémaque*. His essays in the *World* are quite worthy of his reputation for skill and urbanity. Nevertheless, nothing approaches the work—which was no work to him—of those Letters, which he never imagined any one would read, and which are yet the foundation of his literary success."

Lord Carnarvon admits that his hero was emphatically a man of the world and for the most part showed the hard and worldly side of his character; but that character "was also a kindly one, with a depth of affection and devotion which makes his life, to my mind, a very pathetic combination of opposite feelings and qualities. The social standard which he had prescribed for himself, the cynical tone which he had adopted, and the inflexible self-control into which he had trained himself, in part perhaps disguised from himself, and certainly hid from others, the kindlier and softer feelings that had gradually grown up in a long and chequered career." He unquestionably had the remarkable self-control claimed for him. In an age when wits and statesmen sat up throughout the night drinking and card-playing, he retired early and rose early; when he accepted office, he courageously trampled on his strong passion for cards; when deafness compelled him to abandon public life, he found solace in his books, his horses, and his writings; and when the son of his hopes disappointed him he did not repine, while after his premature death he sought a new object upon which to concentrate his affections. Life in large towns, and plenty of it, seems to have been Chesterfield's motto; and his greatest interest lay in building his fine house in London. "I love capitals extremely," he wrote to his son; "it is in capitals that the best company is to be found," and he cordially endorsed the proposition that "there are only three capitals, London, Paris, and Rome; and that London is the only place to live in."

As a statesman, Lord Chesterfield was not extreme. Indeed, it is pointed out that in an age of bitter partisanship he stood almost alone. Examples are furnished of his moderating force in politics. He was the principal agent in the destruction of Walpole's Playhouse Bill, which was ostensibly a measure for licensing theatrical representations, but really one for gagging the theatres. In 1744 he opposed a measure for visiting with far-reaching penalties the descendants of the Pretender. Although he had taken an active part against the Jacobites in his earlier days, and had savagely, but yet only temporarily, denounced the Scots, he recognized after the struggle that the time had come when the new dynasty no longer needed extraordinary defences. And when after 1745 other politicians clamored for the extreme penalties of the law,—prisons, scaffolds, disarming acts,—his voice was for schools and villages to civilize the Highlands. He had essentially the mind of a statesman; "more truly than any of his contemporaries he measured some of the real causes of Irish disaffection; and almost alone of observers he foretold the terrible catastrophe that was impending in France." Nearly forty years before the deluge of the French Revolution broke upon king and Church and nobles and people,—all alike blind to coming events,—Lord Chesterfield summed up in a single sentence his estimate of the incapacity of Frenchmen for constitutional government: "*Vous savez faire des barricades, mais vous n'élèverez jamais des barrières;*" and in a famous letter he counted up the signs and the causes of the coming tempest. "All the symptoms," he wrote, "which I ever met with in history previous to great changes and revolutions in government now exist and daily increase in France." He had in these matters the far-seeing eye which could pierce into the future. That he did not take a more leading part in actual statesmanship was due probably to his over-cautious nature, his tendency to be always holding the balance, and his lack of enthusiasm.

With regard to the literary aspect of his career, he was unfortunate enough to incur the hostility of three of the most prominent men of letters of his time, Horace Walpole, Lord Hervey, and Dr. Johnson. They levelled against him all their shafts of wit and sarcasm. "He was a stunted giant," said Lord Hervey; "he had a person as disagreeable as it was possible for a human being to have without being deformed, and a broad, rough-featured, ugly face, with black teeth, and a head big enough for a Polyphemus." According to this authority, Chesterfield had neither honor nor principle. Johnson's judgment, which originated in personal dislike, was equally severe, and it did irreparable damage to Chesterfield with posterity. The great lexicographer's letter will never be forgotten. But it must also not be ignored that Johnson was very sensitive and exacting, and he sometimes got beside himself with rage, as when flagellating those "hateful Dissenters" and the "cursed Whigs." Johnson would not even allow that Chesterfield had wit; but in this he was manifestly wrong. Lord Carnarvon cites two examples alone which clearly rebuke Johnson's hasty judgment. "Tyrawley and I have been dead these two years," said Chesterfield on one occasion, "but we do not choose to have it known." And excellently true to the political feeling of the day was

his declaration that "if the people of England wished to prevent the Pretender from obtaining the crown they should make him Elector of Hanover, for they would never fetch another king from there." But as a writer of epigrams one cannot agree with Lord Carnarvon's high estimate of Chesterfield, and the best thing he quotes, the famous epigram on Beau Nash's picture, is doubtful in its authorship, and was claimed during Chesterfield's lifetime for Miss Jane Brereton.

But of wit itself Chesterfield gives one of the finest definitions ever penned, in a letter to his godson. "If God gives you wit," he writes in this charming letter, "which I am not sure that I wish you, unless he gives you at the same time at least an equal portion of judgment to keep it in good order, wear it, like your sword, in the scabbard, and do not brandish it to the terror of the whole company. If you have real wit, it will flow spontaneously, and you need not aim at it. Wit is so shining a quality that everybody admires it, most people aim at it, all people fear it, and few love it unless in themselves. A man must have a good share of wit himself to endure a great share of it in another. When wit exerts itself in satire it is a most malignant distemper: wit, it is true, may be shown in satire, but satire does not constitute wit, as most fools imagine it does. A man of real wit will find a thousand better occasions of showing it. Abstain, therefore, most carefully from satire. The more wit you have, the more good nature and politeness you must show, to induce people to pardon your superiority, for that is no easy matter." Equally happy is the philosopher's description of "*je ne saay quoy*." "It is a most inestimable quality," he says, "and adorns every other. It is, in my opinion, a compound of all the agreeable qualities of body and mind, in which no one of them predominates in such a manner as to give exclusion to any other. It is not mere wit, mere beauty, mere learning, nor indeed mere any one thing, that produces it, though they all contribute something towards it. It is owing to this *je ne saay quoy* that one takes a liking to some one particular person at first rather than to another. One feels one's self prepossessed in favor of that person without being enough acquainted with him to judge of his intrinsic merit or talents, and one feels one's self inclined to suppose him to have good sense, good nature, and good humor. It is, in short, an extract of all the graces."

Lord Macaulay, in one of those curious empirical judgments which he sometimes formed, depreciated the Chesterfield Letters, while he accorded the highest praise to their author's wit, taste, and eloquence, affirming that "what remains of his Parliamentary oratory is superior to anything of that time that has come down to us, except a little of Pitt's." Even Horace Walpole pays repeated tributes to Chesterfield's eloquence. He alludes especially to a very fine speech which he made in 1741, when attacking Sir Robert Walpole's tottering administration, during the debate on the Address against the House of Hanover. Horace Walpole also states that he was in the House of Lords in 1743, and heard Lord Chesterfield make the finest speech that he had ever listened to for the discontinuance of the Hanoverian troops; yet Walpole had heard his own father, and had likewise heard Pitt, Pulteney, Wyndham, and Carteret. Dr. Johnson claimed the credit of

having prepared some of Lord Chesterfield's speeches. Of two of his lordship's orations, one was said to have rivalled Demosthenes and the other Cicero; and the recollection of his famous speech on the Reform of the Calendar has been perpetuated with absolute and unqualified praise.

But the English Rochefoucauld, as Sainte-Beuve called Chesterfield, stands or falls by his Letters. Strange fact, consequently, that his literary fame is due to an accident, for neither the original Letters to his son, nor those now published addressed to his godson, were intended for the outside world. Lord Carnarvon observes that the Letters to his son were written when Chesterfield was "in his full physical and intellectual strength,—many of them in the midst of the anxiety and labors of public business; whilst those to his godson were written when political life was definitely abandoned, when age was heavy on him, and infirmities had, as he sometimes said, shut him out from the converse and the society which he loved best and in which he most excelled. But they show no sign of mental decay; they indulge in no regrets for the pleasures and interests which had already drifted away from him. There is not an ungenial word to sour the advice which he gives, or to cloud the young mind which he desires to educate." With most of this judgment readers of both sets of Letters will be disposed to agree, but as to their respective literary merits I think they will differ from Lord Carnarvon. The Letters now published have frequently a higher moral tone than those addressed to the son, but what they gain in morality they lose in literary effectiveness. The earlier Letters are the more noticeable for their vivacity, wit, and intellectual strength; and it is but reasonable perhaps that they should be so. Yet, on the whole, I for one prefer the Letters to the godson. There is not so much of smartness and labored epigram about them, but there is more heart and a higher appreciation of what is noble in morals and conduct. Now and again there is an appeal to a loftier tribunal than the selfish and cultured society which in earlier years was the great object of the philosopher's worship.

A few passages from the Letters themselves will establish this point, and clearly prove that the writer in his latter days was moved by more serious thoughts than he has sometimes been given credit for. For example, in a letter to his godson dated August 2, 1762, he enjoins the boy to attend diligently to his studies, and adds, "I must from time to time remind you of two much more important duties which I hope you will never forget nor neglect: I mean your duty to God and your duty to man. God has been so good as to write in all our hearts the duty that he expects from us; which is adoration and thanksgiving, and doing all the good we can to our fellow-creatures. Our conscience, if we will but consult and attend to it, never fails to remind us of those duties." Can this be the "wicked" Lord Chesterfield who is thus speaking to us?—the man whose last utterance in this world, "Give Dayrolles a chair," has often been pointed to as a proof of his callousness and utter lack of consideration for the great Christian verities? It only serves to show, what I, and probably others, have always felt, that there are very few real infidels in the world.

To teach the boy honor, Chesterfield wrote in his very first pub-

lished letter, "I do not know if you remember (but I am apt to think you do) that I promised to send you a watch for the first letter you should write to me with your own hand. Now, as a man of honor performs whatever he has promised, even without being put in mind of it, I have bought you a watch, which I will send to you by the first opportunity." And not long afterwards he proffers the following further piece of valuable advice : "The first great step toward pleasing is to desire to please ; and whoever really desires it will please to a certain degree." "Believe," he says in another place, "every word in the Bible, as it was dictated by the Spirit of Truth," and "God's blessing be with thee, for without that all the rest is useless." The habit of swearing pervaded all classes during the last century, and it was therefore quite contrary to the prevailing thought and practice of the time when Chesterfield wrote to his godson, "A gentleman will never swear, for his word is his bond. I am sure that you will never swear or curse, for it is not only a crime in the eyes of God, but a sign of low and vulgar breeding."

In enlightening the youth upon the modern languages, he distinguishes Spanish for prayer, German for command, Italian for love, and French for conversation. French, indeed, he eulogizes as the international language, and no man in his own time, and very few since, wrote and spoke it with the same fluency and correctness as Lord Chesterfield. As regards Latin, he observes of himself after he left Cambridge, "At the University I was an absolute pedant. When I talked my best I quoted Horace; when I aimed at being facetious I quoted Martial; when I had a mind to be a fine gentleman I talked Ovid. I was convinced that none but the ancients had common sense, and that the classics contained everything that was either necessary, useful, or ornamental." He therefore recommended the study of Latin as the real foundation of knowledge, and Lord Carnarvon is rather astonished that Chesterfield's own Latin quotations are sometimes weak; but what Englishman remains a thorough Latinist to the end of his days? Of course it is always possible for fine Latin scholars to avoid in themselves and to detect in others a false quantity, but that feat does not exhaust proficiency in the Latin tongue.

A touch of the democratic spirit breaks out in this injunction : "The lowest and the poorest people in the world expect good breeding from a gentleman, and they have a right to it; for they are by nature your equals, and are no otherwise your inferiors than by their education and their fortune. Therefore whenever you speak to people who are no otherwise your inferiors than by these circumstances you must remember to look them in the face and to speak to them with great humanity and *douceur*, or else they will think you proud and hate you." Recurring to the same subject in another letter, he says, "Remember that there is no one thing so necessary for a gentleman as to be perfectly civil and well-bred; nobody was ever loved that was not well-bred; and, to tell you the truth, neither your papa nor I shall love you if you are not well-bred, and I am sure you desire that we should both love you, as we do now, because you are a very good boy. And so God bless you." By way of showing Lord Chesterfield's views upon elo-

quence, as well as the means he took for encouraging his godson in his studies, I may quote the following passage : " You told me that you sometimes read Cicero. Go on with him : he writes both the best Latin and the best sense of any author. Besides, he will best qualify you to make a figure one day in Parliament, which I dare say you would wish to do, but which no man can do unless he is an eloquent speaker. Study, therefore, the art of speaking with propriety and elegance. Hitherto, I own, it is above your years, but have it always in your mind at least ; speak as elegantly as you can now, and insensibly you will speak better and better every day, till you are of an age to study the principles of that useful and necessary art. The two great masters and models of it were Demosthenes among the Greeks and Cicero among the Romans ; and why should not you be so among the English ? You may have a good chance for it, if you please, by application ; and nothing can be done without application. I believe I have told you formerly what Charles the Twelfth of Sweden used to say, that any man might do whatsoever he pleased by resolution and perseverance." This is only putting in another form Napoleon's saying, that genius is simply the capacity for taking infinite pains.

On the question as to who are really the great men of the past, Chesterfield utters some wise words. " A perfect knowledge of history," he remarks to his godson, " is absolutely necessary for a gentleman and minister of state, which you intend to be. You will find in history many examples to imitate and to avoid, for in truth it is an account of the crimes and follies as well as of the virtues and wisdom of mankind. Study it, therefore, with attention and reflection. Emulate the virtues and abhor the crimes which you will meet with in it. The shining characters in history are those of conquerors, who are in truth only illustrious robbers and murderers ; while the solid virtues of legislators, so beneficial to society, are in a manner neglected. Every school-boy has heard of, and is apt to admire, that mad Macedonian, Alexander the Great, and few know Aristides the Just, who was an honor to humanity, as the other was a disgrace to it. Your favorite virtue, philanthropy, is by no means the characteristic of conquerors."

But the best of all Chesterfield's letters to his godson is that numbered CVIII. in Lord Carnarvon's volume, on Moral Duties and the Christian Religion. " Religious duties, or obligations," observes the writer, " are to love God and keep his commandments, which he has in truth written in the heart of every rational creature. The ten commandments, which are often called the Decalogue, set forth all our religious and most of our moral duties. Moral duties, or obligations, are what we owe to our fellow-creatures,—that is, to all mankind. God has created us such dependent creatures that we all want one another's assistance. Were you the only creature upon earth, what would you do for food, clothes, beds to lie upon, and a house to live in?—in short, for all the comforts of life ? You could not procure them yourself. Since, then, you owe all these advantages to your fellow-creatures, it is plainly your moral duty to repay them these obligations, by doing them all the good you can, by relieving to the utmost of your power their miseries and distresses, by indulgence, by charity, by loving them,

which is called philanthropy. It was for this reason that our Almighty Creator made us with so many wants and infirmities, that mutual help and assistance are absolutely necessary not only for our well-being but for our being at all. The Christian religion carries our moral duties to greater perfection, and orders us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who use us ill. Now, as love or hate is not in our power, though our actions are, this commandment means no more than that we should forgive those who use us ill, and that instead of resenting or revenging injuries we shoud return good for evil. For example, if my enemy were hungry, naked, in sickness, or in pain, I would relieve him to the utmost of my power; and so would you, I am sure, because you are a good-natured, benevolent boy." It will be manifest that advice to a youth just setting out in the thorny paths of life could not reach a higher level than this. The additional letters from Lord Chesterfield to Mr. A. C. Stanhope (the father of Philip), which were first printed in 1817, and which are now reprinted, scarcely bear out Lord Carnarvon's high opinion of them. To say that they reveal no particular epistolary skill would be unjust, but they cannot be placed for a moment either beside the letters addressed to the son or those written to the godson. There are few evidences of talent or originality in them.

Taking Lord Carnarvon's work as a whole, however, it will certainly do something towards placing Lord Chesterfield upon a higher plane in the world's esteem. That he was a capable man, a polite man, and a cultured man, goes without saying; but it now appears that he was a more urbane and humane man than has been generally thought. Deep down in his nature there were serious and elevated thoughts, though they were too frequently hidden and encrusted by worldly considerations. These Letters will not, of course, completely remove the impression that Chesterfield, like Carlyle, was "gey ill to live with." This was proved by his relations with Voltaire alone. The brilliant Frenchman was highly caressed by all the English nobility, but by no one more than by Lord Chesterfield. Yet whenever Voltaire failed to dine with him, Chesterfield overwhelmed him with reproaches. At length, being very hard pressed on one occasion, Voltaire said, with some acrimony, "My lord, I always consider it as a singular honor to be in company with a nobleman of your lordship's genius and abilities; but really, my lord, when I find how much you prostitute the gifts of nature by entertaining sharpers and adventurers, I pity your judgment and admire my own abilities." Chesterfield, turning upon his heel, retorted, "I love mind, even when I meet with it in a scoundrel." But, in spite of his faults and eccentricities, it is pleasant to discover something more of good to Chesterfield's credit than the world was hitherto aware of. He was neither altogether a cynic nor merely worldly-wise. That he could ever win our affection, like a Fox in politics or a Goldsmith in literature, is out of the question, but that there was a strain of human tenderness in him which has too frequently been ignored is abundantly demonstrated by these charming Letters to his Godson.

G. Barnett Smith.

MY LADY WAITS.

BENEATH the splendor of the Southern sun
 A woman waits ; dark chestnut is her hair,
 And like a clean-cut cameo her face,
 By some pale artist wrought and dwelt upon
 Till life breathed in the stone ; and she is fair,
 Like some slim lily in the garden-place.

That in her heart my life should find a place,
 That she should wait for me at set of sun,
 That she should name me "Love!" a boon more fair
 Life cannot give, than I should press the hair
 Back from her low white brow, and gaze upon
 The love-lit frankness of her pure young face.

If this may be, then I must turn my face
 Away from her, and win the right to place
 My life at her command, strike heel upon
 All that is false, nor must to-day's spent sun
 Know me untrue. I may not touch her hair
 Unless I be as true as she is fair.

She hath not spoken aught, or cold or fair,
 Nor have I asked. I have but read her face,
 And watched the sunlight glinting on her hair,
 And loved her. If for me there be a place
 In her pure heart, I know not. Now the sun
 May kiss what I would lay my hand upon.

I know not what may be, but thus upon
 My heart is put a pledge for purpose fair,
 Whatever else may chance. Beneath the sun
 Men are but human ; so this woman's face
 Would keep me strong and pure ; then I may place,
 As doth the sun, my kiss upon her hair.

And this I know,—my lady waits, her hair
 Back from her low white brow, a blessing on
 Her lips. Against my heart my hand I place
 And pray that I be true as she is fair,
 So that at last I may look in her face,
 Beneath the splendor of the Southern sun.

O heart, all doubts displace—the prize is fair !
 That I may kiss her hair, as doth the sun,
 Strive bravely on, thy shield her pure young face.

Charles Washington Coleman.

"BOND'S."

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay.

THE romance that touches us most tenderly is that of the tranquil life. We are most sensitive to its sentiment, since it seems to us most real. And everywhere in the world there is romance.

Presently a board walk will lie along the serpentine length of white sand from Sandy Hook to Cape May, and back of it, tailing off to the pines, there will be a populous summer city of divers names, but really one and incomparable. Fifty years ago the marsh-hens, snipe, and brant had it their own way on the Jersey coast, and where now a million summer sojourners and excursionists may choose among the multitudinous settlements along this admirable stretch of beach, there were then but few popular resorts. Philadelphia and New York sportsmen, men of leisure and ruddy skin, skilled in the use of rod and gun, lawyers, merchants, and politicians,—all sorts of men in good condition,—spent happy careless days in spring, summer, autumn, and winter at "Bond's." To-day there still survive some amateurs who go down to the sea to fish and sail, and only such are to be found at Beach Haven, a delightful spot about midway of Long Beach, which is itself about equidistant from Sandy Hook and Cape May. And as Beach Haven on a clear day is plainly within sight of "Bond's," one naturally wonders whether the sensible, sunburnt folk who fill its few hotels and sporadic cottages are not the saving remnant or the wise progeny of the choice spirits who years ago silenced the roar of the surf with their revelry in the rambling old inn below. This, indeed, is largely a fact. You may sit upon the piazza of the "Baldwin" any day in the season and overhear good yarns of those fine old times at Bond's. That is the refrain; always it is Bond's. And once he has registered there comes surely from the lips of each new arrival this expected question: "How is Bond?"

It was more than a half-century ago that he first came to Long Beach. The inn was then a smallish square frame building, set bleakly on the dune, where all the winds of heaven might smite and rock it. On one side lay the sea, on the other the widening waters of Barnegat Bay, here known as Little Egg Harbor Inlet. Over on the mainland you could catch a glimpse of Tuckerton, and that was the way the captain came. All the jolly company came that way, staging along over sandy roads to Tuckerton, eating dust for a day and dreaming of the tonic air ahead, and then sailing gayly over the inlet to the isolated hostelry set athwart the sky. It was so James Bond first came from New York City. He was then a quiet man not yet of middle age, a man of pleasing speech and attractive eye; one who loved his gun and used it shrewdly. The place possessed him as it did all who ever visited it, and he came again and again. There were those who then

said and always said afterwards (though the man himself cannot be numbered among them) that it was the natural solitude of the spot and not its factitious hilarity that drew Bond to it. Whatever the facts may have been upon which these persons based their belief, it is certain that a tradition remains of a romance of which Bond is the interesting hero, of a love-affair inchoate and mysterious, of a strong man left spiritless and soured. Authentic or not (no one ever heard Bond open his lips in support or scorn of the pretty story), that is the tradition, and Long Beach stands or falls by it. It is beyond dispute, indeed, that he was eager to leave the haunts of men; misogynist he was, too; and, abandoning a lucrative business, he came and wedded the sea. There he has lived ever since, and there he will surely die, albeit a thousand hearts will wish that God may stay the hour.

The rare old days at Bond's were not less vociferous than halcyon. Men of distinction, not lacking in the reposeful manner and superior airs of the metropolitan, came with a fine dignity as far as Tuckerton and there collapsed. Once in sight of Bond's it was all over with their breeding. They were madcap then, rascally urchins again, obstreperous, devilish. They shocked the air with their guns and lungs, and held high carnival in the corridors of the inn. It was quite the humorous thing for Bond's guests to carve their names on his office counter. They mostly registered in that solid way. There was another custom always enjoyable to those who practised it, of firing off guns when mounting the stairs to bed. It was far pleasanter, of course, to nervous guests to have the early dawn saluted in this wise through the open windows; but then Bond's was never much of a resort for nervous guests. It would very likely have been impossible for a man of nerves to detect the fun that lay in the simple act of leading a milch cow or a mule into the inn and solemnly conducting it up-stairs into the room of some absent sportsman. But the nervous man was the very one who returned to find sheep, and horses, and dead sharks, and all sorts of misplaced things, in his chamber of horrors.

After Bond himself the most respected object at the inn was old "Life Everlasting," a sizable goat with a sinister eye. He was as much a part of the place as the like of him is commonly supposed to be a part of the awful initiatory mysteries of the lodge. He browsed so quietly and looked so entirely at peace with mankind that the newcomer was always eager to make his acquaintance. A dozen rogues stood ready to officiate at the pleasing ceremony. They had all themselves undergone the memorable introduction. It was soon over; "Life Everlasting" lowered his head and charged, and he usually hit his mark, and the victim arose from the sand lusting for an opportunity to present his best friend as a target to Capricorn.

Meanwhile, Bond looked amiably on, marking these exuberances of spirit with an amused smile. He was the most lenient of landlords, to be sure, yet never powerless to control his guests. When there was pandemonium in the house he could suppress it as readily as he could close his bar, which was practically the best way to do it. Between Bond and these merry fellows there was perfect understand-

ing, a unique community of interest; for on his part was the welcome distraction of their frolic, and on theirs the sense of obligation to a host who permitted it.

They called him Captain, and he had won the title bravely. It was on the 3d of December, 1852, when the wind was blowing great guns from the southeast, and a tremendous sea was on. A thick fog soaked the shore and shrouded the sea, but some time towards noon, faint above the thunder of the surf, came the booming of a ship's guns. Bond's alert ears caught the signal of distress, and speedily as possible he collected a "scrub" crew and drove along the beach to the building erected by the government as shelter for the (then) new metallic life-boat and ropes. Presently the wreck loomed through the dashing mist. It was the ship *Georgia*, Captain Alexander Marshall Brodie, lying a helpless hulk, its mainmast cut away, and the breakers leaping over it. Bond managed his men adroitly. The first shot from the mortar placed the rope between the standing masts of the vessel, and soon the second line was hauled on board by the crew and the shore end attached to the bow of the life-boat. With another line fastened to her stern the boat was passed from the shore to the ship, back and forth, until the two hundred and seventy-two passengers and the crew of eighteen men were landed safely on the beach. It was a gallant rescue, and all honor for it was due to Bond, yet so little did he get, that it was even necessary for him to go to law to recover the modest sum he charged Captain Brodie for the feeding and sheltering of the ungrateful two hundred and ninety.

In fair weather you are sure to find him rocking on the small porch of his cottage. To the south, set up high and square against the sky, is the old building still known as Bond's. But it is no longer his. The long low inn is rickety now, and the light and salt air sift through its weather-stained boarding. Captain Bond himself has outlived it, if not the memories of its jocund days. You find him in an easy-chair facing towards the scene of a thousand wassails. Round about him is a strip of vegetable garden, and he keeps it tilled and tidy with his own hands. He is ninety years of age, though both you and he are loath to believe it. A bright and sometimes flashing eye, a ruddy skin, a straight and stoutish figure, stiffened somewhat in motion by rheumatism, a clear sharp voice with a waggish note in it, a face something like Longfellow's, with less white beard and hair and a coarser skin,—that is Bond to-day, or rather an impression of him. He reads without glasses, and has yet to learn that strong drink is raging.

"Old?" he says. "Nonsense! They called me old when I was seventy."

You glance back at him as you drive away. He is erect and stalwart, looking in his blue flannel shirt and trousers a handsome and hearty old salt. As such he would be interesting enough, but there is his piquant past. The mystery of it begets romantic speculation,—tempts to the writing of fiction. What if Bond was loved by some exquisite creature who—

"Nonsense!" says Bond.

And Bond goes to the grave with but one expressed regret. Mark the pathos of it. "Yes," he says of the waggish multitude he has entertained, "they remember me. They come here to see me, and it does me good. Only one of them," he adds, with a sorrowful shake of his head, "stayed away. That was _____. He was at Beach Haven last summer a year ago and he didn't come to see me. That's pretty hard." The shake in his voice was exquisite.

M. P.

THE FAMOUS SONNET OF ARVERS.

[*Arvers was a young littérateur who died by his own hand about 1846. This sonnet was found among his private papers. It is known in French literature as "Le fameux Sonnet d'Arvers."*]

MY soul has its own secret ; life its care :
A hopeless love, that in one moment drew
The breath of life. Silent its pain I bear,
Which she who caused it knows not,—never knew.
Alas ! by her unmarked, my passion grew
As by her side I walked,—most lonely there.
And long as life may last I am aware
I shall win nothing,—for I dare not sue ;
Whilst she whom God has made so kind and sweet
Goes heedless on her way with steadfast feet,
Unconscious of Love's whispers murmured low.
To duty faithful as a saint, some day
Reading these lines, all filled with her, she'll say,
"Who was this woman?" and will never know.

Translated by Mrs. E. W. Latimer.

WHOM OTHERS ENVY.

THROUGH years of patient toil and sacrifice
He climbed Fame's ladder, round by round,
Nor rested till his hand had grasped the prize
For which he toiled. Self-made, self-crowned,
He stood among his lofty dreams, and weighed
Their worth, together with the price he paid.

A millionaire!—he bartered love for this,—
Love binds the wings of him who would arise.
He rose unfettered. Now with famished eyes
He gazes on another's Paradise,
While Memory taunts him with a shy, sweet kiss,
A frightened, fluttering thing, the first, the last.
No childish voices echo through his past :
He wears his laurels, but he paid their price.

Rose Hartwick Thorpe.

ACCIDENTS AND TRIFLES.

SOME very wise men hold that there is no such thing as an accident and no such thing as a trifle,—that what looks to us as the merest chance is inevitable and must have happened, as a part of the great foreordained history of the world, and that there is no great and no small in the sight of Him

Who sees with equal eye, as Lord of all,
A hero perish or a sparrow fall.

Something of the same thought was given expression by Michael Angelo. A visitor at his studio marvelled that he should spend the whole day in adjusting some infinitesimal bit of clay on a statue. "Gentlemen," said Michael Angelo, "this may seem to you a trifle, but it is trifles that make perfect; and perfection is no trifle."

Nevertheless, there is a certain amount of amusement and even information to be gained in speculating on what might have occurred but for some more or less trifling circumstances. "If the nose of Cleopatra had been shorter," says Pascal, boldly, "the whole face of the earth would have been different." "A common soldier," says Edmund Burke, "a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature." A glass of wine too much is said to have turned the course of French history. The son and heir of Louis Philippe always confined himself to a certain number of glasses, because he knew that beyond that number he was sure to get drunk. On a certain morning he forgot to count the glasses, and drank one more than usual. Entering his carriage he stumbled; the frightened horses ran away; the young prince leaped out of the carriage, struck his head against the pavement, and was killed. That extra glass of wine overthrew the Orleans rule, confiscated the property of the family, and sent them into exile.

If Mary had lived a little longer, or Elizabeth had died a little sooner, John Stuart Mill thinks, the Reformation would have been crushed in England. If Napoleon had been well at the time of the battle of Waterloo, the result might have been different. His indisposition, so some historians tell us, made it impossible for him to sit in the saddle without discomfort. Nay, when Noah was in the ark, would not the most trifling error in steering have shipwrecked the whole human race?

It was a chapter of accidents that gave to Spain for many generations the leadership in the New World and the consequent wealth which made her at one period the most important of European nations. Columbus, it will be remembered, after applying in vain to a number of other courts, despatched his brother Bartolommeo to ask aid from Henry the Seventh of England. Now, it happened that Bartolommeo fell into the hands of pirates, and landed in England so destitute that he was not presentable at court. But by the time he had earned a little money he was too late: Columbus had had his memorable interview with Isabella of Spain. Even that interview was the result of accident. If Juan Perez de Marcaña, the queen's confessor, had not happened to be passing by the door of the La Rabida monastery at the very moment when the weary mariner was asking alms there, and if the reverend gentleman had not pos-

sessed the penetration to be struck by the noble lineaments of the ragged and dusty beggar, Columbus might never have been presented to the queen. Therefore, if Bartolommeo had reached London in time, or if Columbus had been a moment earlier or a moment later in applying at the monastery door,—indeed, if Columbus, like many other great men, had been of insignificant face and stature,—the fate of the New World might have been entirely different.

If Citizen Napoleon had carried out his intention of offering his sword to the Sultan, or if in 1806 the Emperor Napoleon had yielded to the temptation to abandon Europe as a field for his ambition and try what he could accomplish among the dissatisfied provinces of South America, who can say what consequences might have followed? Who can conjecture what the history of the world might have been if the Genoese after the peace of Paris had not sold Corsica to France, if Luther's friend had escaped the thunder-storm, if the spider had not woven its web across the cave in which Mohammed had taken refuge? Sallust says that a periwinkle led to the capture of Gibraltar. The cackling of geese saved the Roman nation from the Gauls. "A chambermaid," wrote Chesterfield to his son, "has often made a revolution in palaces, which was followed by political revolution in kingdoms; the subtlest diplomacy has sometimes been interrupted by a cough or a sneeze."

If trifles seem to have determined the fate of nations, accidents equally small have led men into pursuits which have made them benefactors of their race. Cowley became a poet through reading the "Faerie Queene;" Reynolds had never thought of painting until Richardson's treatise fell into his hands; Corneille showed no liking for any except legal literature until he fell in love and felt it necessary to relieve his passion in verse; Molière might have continued weaving tapestry had not his grandfather piqued his pride by wishing he could be an actor like Montrose. If that sturdy soldier Don Ifigo Lopez de Loyola had not received a wound which led him to beguile the leisure of convalescence by reading "The Lives of the Saints," the world might never have heard of him as Ignatius Loyola, nor of the famous order of Jesuits which he founded.

Every one has read of the falling apple which led Newton to investigate the laws of gravitation; of the boiling tea-kettle which suggested to Watt the power of steam; of the swinging lamp which gave Galileo his first idea of the pendulum.

In the history of science, of manufactures, of literature, of art, in every department of human activity, instances of the happy accident may be found. Accident made Sir Walter Scott a novelist. It will be remembered that he threw away the unfinished manuscript of "Waverley" in disgust, and about eight years afterwards, rummaging in the drawers of an old cabinet for some fishing-tackle, came across the discarded manuscript. Was there ever a more striking instance of a man finding a kingdom while he sought his father's asses?

If a few drops of aqua-fortis had not fallen on the spectacles of a Nuremberg cutler, etching on glass might still have been unknown. If the gun-barrel of a sentry had not become rusted with dew, mezzotints might not have delighted the eyes of generations. The first hint of the telescope was obtained in the discovery accidentally made by the children of a Dutch spectacle-maker. Holding the spectacle-glasses between their thumbs and fingers, they were startled by the suddenly enlarged appearance of a neighboring church spire. But the Dutchman was too thick-headed to profit by this accident, and the

magnifying power of glass was turned to no use until Galileo, led by science, fell upon it again and obtained the most sublime results.

The shot-tower of modern times is said to have been the accidental result of a curious dream. A shot-maker named Watts lived in Bristol, England. He plied his trade in the usual way, taking great bars of lead, pounding them into sheets of the necessary thickness, then cutting the sheets into small cubes, which he rolled in a little barrel until the corners were worn off by constant friction. One night he dreamed that he had been at a merrymaking, and that the revellers were all trying to find their way home, when it began to rain shot : beautiful globules, polished and shining, fell at his feet. Next morning, remembering his dream, he wondered what would happen if molten lead were thrown down from a great height. At length he carried a ladle full of the hot metal to the steeple of St. Mary Redclyffe and dropped it into the moat below. On descending, he found at the bottom of the shallow pool handfuls of perfect shot superior to any he had ever manufactured. His fortune was made from that moment: he had conceived the idea of the shot-tower.

Argand invented the lamp which bears his name by long processes of thought, but the chimney which perfected his invention was the result of chance. One day he was busy in his work-room before the burning lamp. His little brother was amusing himself by placing a bottomless oil-flask over different articles. Suddenly he placed it on the flame of the lamp, which immediately shot up the long, circular neck of the flask with increased brilliancy. Argand took the hint, and the modern lamp-chimney was the result.

The art of lithographing was perfected through accidental suggestions. A poor musician was curious to know whether music could be etched upon stone as well as upon copper. After preparing a slab, his mother asked him to make a memorandum of some clothes to be washed. Having neither pen nor paper convenient, he wrote the list on the stone with an etching preparation, intending to make a copy at his leisure. When about to clean off the stone, he wondered what effect aqua-fortis would have upon it. The application of the acid made the writing stand out in relief. Inking the stone, he found he could take a perfect impression.

A hen that had gone through a clay puddle left her tracks on a pile of sugar in a sugar-house. It was noticed that wherever she stepped the sugar was whitened. Experiments were made, and the result was that wet clay came to be used in refining sugar.

Accidents that at first sight appeared to be misfortunes have often turned out to be blessings in disguise. To take a minor instance, Sothern, in playing "Lord Dundreary," accidentally tripped while crossing the stage and excited the laughter of the audience. Forthwith he adopted the tripping step, which became one of the features of his performance. The wife of an English paper-maker let a bluing-bag fall into one of the vats of pulp. The workmen were dismayed when they saw the peculiar color of the paper, the owner of the mill was very angry, and his wife was too frightened to confess the truth. After storing the damaged paper for several years, the manufacturer sent it to his agent in London, with instructions to sell it for what it would bring. Tinted paper was at that time unknown in the market; it was accepted as a purposed novelty, and was disposed of at quite an advance over current rates. The manufacturer was astonished to get an order for another large invoice. He found himself in a quandary. But his wife now came forward and told

about the accident. He kept the secret, and the demand for the novel tint far exceeded the ability to supply it. A genuine disaster brought still greater luck to the tobacconist Lundy Foot of Dublin. His store was totally destroyed by fire. While gazing dolefully into the smouldering ruins, he noticed that his poorer neighbors were gathering the snuff from the canisters. Trying a pinch himself, he discovered that the fire had greatly increased its pungency and aroma. He profited by the hint at once, secured another store, subjected the snuff to a heating process in ovens, gave the brand a particular name, and in a few years was rolling in wealth.

"Small things," says the proverb, "proclaim the man." The truth of this saying was recognized by a banker to whom Laffitte, a poor boy, had applied for a situation. The application was refused, but as Laffitte went out he stopped to pick up a pin from the floor and fastened it to his coat. The banker called him back, gave him employment, and Laffitte became the wealthiest man in France.

Dr. Delaunay, a well-known Paris scientist, has made some curious observations which show the connection between little things and great. To ascertain the qualities of an applicant cook, he says it is sufficient to give her a plate to clean or a sauce to make, and watch how she moves her hand in either act. If she moves it from left to right, or in the direction of the hands of a watch, you may trust her; if the other way, she is certain to be stupid and incapable. The intelligence of people may also be gauged, the doctor says, by asking them to make a circle on paper with a pencil, and noting in which direction the hand is moved. The good students in a mathematical class draw circles from left to right. The inferiority of the softer sex, as well as of the male dunces, is shown by their drawing from right to left. Asylum patients do the same.

William Shepard.

BRITISH SIDE-GLANCES AT AMERICA.

To hear an American octogenarian still hurrahing for King George, and boasting that his family had never thought much of Mr. Washington, is a specimen of British atavism scarcely to be expected on the free soil of the republic; yet such an anomaly has recently been encountered in one of our large cities. This, which may be called the revolutionary point of view, is that from which many Britons still regard the quondam colonies of their crown. They have, as a rule, relinquished the idea of the native savage in war-paint and feathers, that for several decades has stood for the American, although this effete type is still cherished on some portions of the Continent, as an Italian journal recently announced that Colonel Cody (Buffalo Bill), who was drawing immense crowds in the Eternal City, had gained his military rank "in wars against the Indians conducted by Washington." Such a mistake as this would of course be impossible to the average Englishman, yet with regard to our civilization he pertinaciously clings to a type only a few degrees removed from the picturesque red man, and with regard to our geographical relations formulates hypotheses that may without exaggeration be called eminently ingenious. The anecdote of the foreigner who expatiated on the beauty and grandeur of the Rocky Mountains as viewed from the banks of the Hudson is congenially companioned by that

of the Englishman who, by his remarks to a Philadelphian on Mexico, evidently presupposed a nearness that would admit of sociable visiting between Philadelphians and citizens of the capital of that country.

We are all familiar with such tales of travellers as these, and that of the English lady of rank, who, on meeting a New-Yorker abroad, took it for granted that she knew her son, who was spending some months in the American metropolis, and was greatly disappointed that her new acquaintance "had not had the pleasure" and was consequently unable to unfold a chapter of pleasant recollections of the absent son with which to cheer her motherly heart. Of the same character was the mistake of another English lady, who was greatly interested in the welfare of a young maid-servant about to emigrate to the United States. On hearing that a New-York woman was in the same hotel, she asked for an introduction to her, and begged her to keep an eye on the friendless girl beginning life in a strange land. When the American asked where her *protégée* was to live, the *naïve* reply was, "Oh, in Albany!"—as if Albany were but a ten minutes' walk from New York. Such instances as these could be adduced *ad infinitum*; and the curious coincidence of a distinguished American prelate, while visiting at an episcopal palace in England, being waited on by a cousin of the valet of one of his ecclesiastical brothers on this side of the Atlantic, to whom he was able to give information about his absent relative while his coat was being brushed, furnishes such random queries with a peg to hang upon, and will probably, like a sowing of dragons' teeth, raise a fresh crop of inquiries and surmises to be combated by the sorely-tried and much-questioned American tourist.

It is not to be expected that English people will know just how many miles intervene between New Orleans and New York, or on what rivers our principal towns are situated; but when a map of the United States was brought out, several years since, by the Marcus Ward Company, it did seem a trifle inaccurate to place the capital of New Jersey on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, especially as the crossing of the Delaware by the Federal army at Trenton was a sufficiently noteworthy event of the War of Independence to have emphasized the fact of its location to the British student of geography and history.

In view of these and other misconceptions with regard to the United States, we ought not to be surprised at the following statement made in one of the leading British magazines in an interesting paper on capital punishment: "Since the first day of the present year [1889] it has been the law in America that executions should be carried out by electricity." As we all know, electricity as a death-penalty has been legally adopted by only one State of the Union, New York, which does not presuppose its adoption by all the other States, as the British writer quoted from seems to infer, much less does it make it the law of America, whatever that may be.*

As an offset to such statements as this, we find the editor of one of the most free-spoken English journals animadverting on the misrepresentations of a writer to the *Boston Globe*, this so-called society lady deposing, with regard to the customs of English royalty, that when the queen is visited by a foreign relative tea is served in the Frogmore mausoleum. That the Frogmore mausoleum

* Since writing the above, the unsatisfactory nature of recent experiments in New York in the employment of electricity as an agent of destruction renders the chances of its speedy adoption by the other States of the Union more than doubtful.

has been given a prominent place in the history of this reign none can deny, but the announcement that it is used as the scene of royal tea-drinkings is one that Americans are quite as unlikely to believe as native-born Britons. Nor are we more ready to credit a story from the same source, that a young American girl, who was invited to pass a week at Windsor Palace, discovered that the queen liked to hear blood-curdling tales of wholesale Southern murder and lynching. Absurd and extravagant as are such stories, they are no more so than hundreds of others circulated in British journals with regard to America, and, although they may be considered in the light of fair reprisals, the balance of grievance is still greatly on our side. Mr. James Russell Lowell said, a few years since, "For some reason or other, the European has rarely been able to see the American except in caricature. Hence such facts in the natural history of the American have been long familiar to Europeans as that 'he abhors privacy, knows not the meaning of reserve, lives in hotels because of their greater publicity, and is never so pleased as when his domestic affairs (if he may be said to have any) are paraded in the newspapers.'" Thus, while there are few thoughtful Americans who accept *au sérieux* such distortions of humanity as are depicted in "Aristocracy" and kindred novels as types of the English nobility, *they* unquestioningly receive Octavia Bassett, Asa Trenchards, Hon. Elijah Pograms, and Hannibal Chollops as representative Americans, with the same charming gullibility that distinguished a certain foreign *littérateur* who was pleased to speak of Mr. Clemmens's "Roughing It" as perhaps not very amusing, but valuable as a picture of American civilization.

It must be admitted that our novelists, poets, and dramatists, with their keen sense of the humorous in character and situation, are responsible for many instances that the British generalizer has converted into types. For example, when Mr. Henry James draws a singularly attractive and pretty girl who is neither intelligent nor well bred, with the accompaniment of an inconsequent mother utterly ignorant of the usages of polite society, or when there is presented upon the foreign boards "a Yankee, so called, such an one as has never been seen in North America," as the poet Whitman humorously describes "Our American Cousin," it may not be remarkable that the British reader should accept them as types of the average American, although the reader on this side of the water does not feel bound to accept Mr. Dickens's "Flora Finchings" as the invariable type of the British widow of her class, or "the young man Guppy" as a fair specimen of the Chesterfield of middle-class life. Or, again, when Professor Boyesen, who has lived in the United States long enough to know something of the social life of the people, introduces into one of his novels, and to the best American and English circles in Rome, an enterprising and untrammeled young creature from the "Wild West," whose vocation in life is to recommend a certain "emancipation waist" to all whom she meets, and to sell the same article to all whom she can persuade to be purchasers, it may not appear strange that the English reader should conclude, although he shows some lack of imagination as well as knowledge in reaching such a conclusion, that what is called the first society in the cities of New York and Boston is composed of just such elements. Nor is it to be expected that he will at once grasp the idea that the higher circles of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington are as different from those of Leadville and Guthrie as are the *soirées* of London from the native dances of Timbuctoo or Kuka. Having, however, once appreciated the fact that the United States embraces within its limits more square miles than

are comprised in a group of all the leading powers of Europe, Russia excepted, it should not be difficult for Europeans to understand that in such a vast extent of territory, with its accompanying varieties of climate and modes of living, considerable diversity may reasonably be expected in what they are pleased to call the American type.

It is true, as may be alleged, that the tide of travel has of late been setting westward, but the few educated English people, who explore this country for themselves, are to the great mass of the nation as those Americans, who visit the Orient and have taken to Alaskan journeys, to those who never get beyond the beaten track of European travel.

What most strikes the American abroad is not only the extensive ignorance of otherwise well-informed Englishmen with regard to our life, customs, institutions, and geographical divisions, natural and artificial, but their entire self-satisfaction in such ignorance. Like the proverbial lady, who was distinguished for possessing a singularly large and varied assortment of misinformation from which she was ready to contribute to the conversation on all occasions, our British brothers seem ever willing to display their stock in trade, with an equally amiable ingenuousness. Such a frank manifestation of ignorance, and absence of remorse when confronted with controverting facts, are surely not due to lack of proper self-esteem on their part. We are inclined to believe that such feelings find their rooting in the same soil that produces the *nil admirari* school, which is one of the latest fads in some so-called fashionable circles, where elegant indifference seems to be regarded as the acme of good breeding. Among the *nil admirari* enthusiasm and admiration have gone out, because nothing is really worth while, you know, and consequently there is no use exciting one's self about anything. On this principle, perhaps, the United States, being a crude young country, is not worth the trouble of serious study on the part of those who boast the advantages of a more ancient civilization.

On the other hand, we sometimes find among the higher types of Englishmen a knowledge and appreciation of American life and institutions that demonstrate to us that whatever the British student undertakes to know he will master thoroughly. Such a book as Robert Mackenzie's "America," with its fine clear presentation of our representative system of government, which has proved instructive to many citizens of the republic as well as to foreigners, and Mr. James Bryce's full and fair portrait of American life and characteristics, no less valuable because national shortcomings are set forth as plainly as national virtues, are sufficiently intelligent and appreciative to outweigh a large amount of ignorance and misconception.

JOURNALISM VERSUS LITERATURE.

To one who has acquired the trained newspaper man's habits of close observation it seems strange that so many young men just graduated from college should deem themselves well qualified for journalism because they know how to write. It betrays a singular lack of perceptive faculty in these young men that they can read the newspapers without being forcibly impressed with the anti-literary nature of their business. I dismiss the fact that the main business of a newspaper is with politics, which cannot by any stretch of fancy be pictured

as a topic inspiring to the literary gift as displayed by such men as Hawthorne, Poe, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Guy de Maupassant, men whose tenor of thought and manner of speech are distinctly literary. It is needless to insist here upon the great truth that the only road to eminence in the newspaper profession starts from the desk of the local political news reporter, and leads thence by way of the State capital and Washington to the closet of the leader-writer. It would be well if the youth who aspires to journalistic honors—such as they are—knew this; for it would often prevent the dry-goods trade and the pork business from being robbed of useful men. But it is not to be expected that the boy who comes from a university with a certificate of high scholarship and the *cacoethes scribendi* can be made to understand that. It seems to me much more feasible to inform him that journalism is not a literary calling, but that it is distinctly opposed to the fruition of literary hopes.

The fact that there is very little really good writing to be found in the news columns of the great daily newspapers must have struck all observant persons; and doubtless many have wondered why it is so. Scores of bright and talented young college graduates enter the newspaper business. Is it possible that none of them have a talent for writing? Not at all. Many of them have valuable literary gifts, which, under proper encouragement, would yield good results. I know some newspaper reporters who find time to write for magazines, and who produce admirable matter. John R. Spears, who wrote those fine stories "A Sailor called the Parson" and "The Port of Missing Ships" for *Scribner's*, John J. A'Becket, Harold Frederic, Richard Harding Davis, and others whose literary work has found its way into the magazines, occur to me as reporters who have not permitted their literary abilities to languish. They write stories well, however, in spite of their being reporters, not because of it. I call to mind other cases of men who showed fine literary gifts, went into journalism, and now sound the old chords no more.

Why is daily newspaper work so antagonistic to literary writing? Perhaps an answer was most pointedly given by the city editor of a prominent New York paper to a young seeker after journalistic distinction, who said to him,—

"Mr. ——, I have distinctly literary aspirations."

"Indeed?" was the reply. "Well, for the present you will confine your literary aspirations to the east-side police stations."

The significance of this reply lay in the fact that it bound the young man down to the writing of bare and unadorned statements. This is what makes it impossible for the news writer to do work which has a literary flavor. He may, indeed, cultivate a purity of diction equal to that of Poe; and he may state his facts with a directness and a simplicity not surpassed by John Bunyan; but the principal charms and graces of style are denied him. The reporter is not permitted to indulge in any of those graceful reflections or generalizations which are so important a factor in literary work. Comments, expressions of opinion, and generalizations are reserved for the editorial page, where the leader-writer may employ them with all his skill in elegant dissertation on the moral turpitude of the opposing party's candidate for the mayoralty or the grinding burden of the tariff on imported cabbages.

Secondly, the very things which are most inspiring to the literary worker are nine times out of ten not worth a pinch of snuff from a newspaper point of view. The novelist, for instance, makes a pathetic chapter out of the finding of a lost child in a snow-storm. He paints a thrilling pen-picture of the dis-

masting of a ship at sea and the subsequent sufferings of her crew, who had taken to the boats. A fire furnishes him with material for a marvellous piece of descriptive work, and a marriage arouses his tenderest sentimental powers. He tells the story of these incidents with a grand display of fancy. He weaves around them a wonderful glittering web of language, which simply dazzles the reader. Let us suppose the case of a wholly inexperienced reporter, who has just graduated from college, who is a really fine writer, but who knows nothing about the requirements of a newspaper. He is sent out to confine his literary aspirations to the east-side police stations, and he runs across a pathetic story of a lost child. Let us suppose that, without consulting the night city editor, on his return to the office, he sits down and writes a touching picture of the unhappy little wanderer, lays it on the copy-reader's desk, and goes home. The next morning he picks up his paper and after a long search for his fine article finds this in an obscure corner:

"ANOTHER CHAMPION FASTER.—Officer Dugan, of the Oak Street police, found little Johnny Brown, age 4, of 32 Cherry Street, standing in a snow-drift up to his waist last night at Chambers Street and New Bowery. The child was crying bitterly, and said he had not eaten anything since the day before yesterday. Officer Dugan treated him to a supper of bread-and-milk, and took him to the station-house, where he was claimed later by his mother, who had just recovered from a debauch. The case will be reported to Mr. Gerry's society to-day."

"Old hands" in the newspaper business will, of course, note that this story is not worth a line from a professional point of view and would not get into type at all; but it serves my purpose as an illustration.

And now let me speak of another cause which operates against literary writing in the papers. Reporters are brought face to face daily with all that is most significant in human life; but it is a sad truth that the public would rather read about crimes and casualties than about happy homes and fraternal love. The reporter is, therefore, constantly brought into a professional attitude towards poverty, suffering, crime, and violent death. His nerves must be steeled to face the study of these things with coolness and keen observation. When men and women are struggling to escape from the top story of a burning building, the ideal reporter will never lose his self-command, but will take note mentally of all the details of the scene in order that he may reproduce them later on in a few matter-of-fact lines.

Now, this training tends to blunt a man's sensibilities. It is pretty difficult to shock an old reporter. He has seen about everything that is dreadful in this world, and the result is that he has fallen into a reckless manner of philosophizing. And the peculiarity of the reporter's philosophy is that it simply formulates itself into Byron's lines:

He laughs at all things, for he wants to know,
What, after all, are all things but a show?

In other words, more than half of the keenest and most talented reporters drift into a semi-humorous style of writing. The paragraph about the lost child, in the hands of the majority of the "star" reporters of the daily press, would come out something like this:

"Johnny Brown, age 4, of 32 Cherry Street, has a first mortgage on the future record as a boss faster. Officer Dugan, of the Oak Street station, found Johnny

planted up to his middle in a snow-drift last night down in Chambers Street. The infant Tanner wept copiously, and vowed that he had not had a feed since Tuesday. Officer Dugan filled Johnny up with bread-and-milk and took him to the station-house, where Mrs. Brown soon arrived with a slice of bread-and-butter in one hand and a skate-strap in the other. Mrs. Brown had been having a bout with old John Barleycorn, with the usual results. The S. P. C. C. will take care of her to-day."

I am aware that this is a sorry style; but it is a fair reproduction of the sort of thing that crowds the columns of the daily papers. Let no young man who has literary desires imagine that such writing is done by the uneducated members of the press. The bright young college graduate, who has learned the excellence of a sound English style, is quite as likely to drift into that style of writing as any one else. He is as susceptible to the influences of the newspaper life as any other man. Therefore I advise boys who wish to make their marks as literary workers to let daily journalism alone. It is the poorest training in the world for a literary life.

W. J. Henderson.

BOOK-TALK.

THE POETRY OF A BUSINESS LIFE.

Though nature and life are full of poetry, great poets are few; for the poet is not a seer only, but a "maker" also. Innumerable hearts and minds have the gift to perceive what only one has the gift both to perceive and to write. People are constantly self-deceived about this, and fancy they can express, because they can feel, the beauty, harmony, and pathos of the world; and the delusion is sometimes kept up by the fact that now and again, in a rare verse or two, the fancy comes true. More often, something not good, but nearly good, is achieved, and the writer sees in it, not what it actually is, but what he meant it to be,—an error the reader does not make. Again, assiduous perusal of other poetry, combined with what may be termed unconscious memory, produces a quantity of versification which apes the form but lacks the soul of real poetry. The composer's inspiration is stimulated or generated by the marriage of a faint original experience and a strong communicated hint; while his utterance falls helplessly, into the lilt and fashion of the exemplar. Indeed, the strongest poets who ever soared have often, at the outset of their flight, thus timed their wing-strokes by those of some broad-pinioned predecessor. But, after passing an apprenticeship aloft, they have learnt a rhythmic motion of their own.

There is another class of rhymers who, judging them on the basis of what they have done, might have developed into original poets, but who—whether through pressure of circumstances, or from deliberate choice—have turned into other channels the energy that would have won the bays: or we may say that their poetry, instead of getting written down, is worked out in the deeds and relations of their lives. They do the beauty which others sing: they show how well good actions rhyme, and how musically fall the feet of noble purposes.

Friends are their critics, and the criticism they offer is their friendship. A man who, feeling poetry within him, resolves that it shall be felt rather than heard, may claim the honor due to a noble self-abnegation. Towards such, the muse, we may suppose, feels an arch-and peculiar tenderness; for, although professing to renounce her, human frailty leads them, now and again, openly to invoke her, and to strive, with somewhat unready tongue, to voice her inspiration. She marks their embarrassed wooing with a secret smile, and affects coyness, but, perhaps, loves them none the less for their timidity. She is theirs in spirit, though not in form. "Our union," she says to them, "can never be fully acknowledged before the world; but the bond between us is nevertheless a vital one; and hereafter, in the higher life, its integrity shall be vindicated."

To this class belonged the late Francis Bennoch, of London, a volume of whose fugitive verses has been published by George Bell & Son. Melodious of deeds, he was reticent of rhymes; yet from time to time, during the half-century of his worldly activity, the yearning for verbal expression proved too much for him. To the many who knew the noble, genial, lovable author of these poems, it would be too much to say that they worthily represent him. But much of his book is alive with the stirrings of a genuine and ardent poetic spirit; and not a few of the songs and lyrics might have been conceived by Scott, Burns, or Wordsworth. Had Bennoch thrown into poetry all the passion and wisdom of his nature, he might have been the peer of such men as these, with an insight, humor, and moral sweetness of his own. As it is, though his thought is never obscure nor his sentiment untrue, he occasionally fails in elasticity and ease of expression. The artful simplicity and subtle naturalness that come only of study and experience are not conspicuous in his pages: we see the strong and beautiful idea struggling with but partial success to subdue its verbal medium. Not that the verse is untuneful; but the writer, when in difficulties, is apt to lapse into conventionalities of phrase, or to echo the speech of others. Many of his productions were written rapidly and impulsively, and, in his pre-occupation to grasp his main idea, he neglects to carry his thought through the subordinate details. He is best when he is himself, and his sweetest echoes are less winning than the music of his own voice.

Speaking generally, the songs and lyrics are the best things in this book. Unlike other poets who are also men of business, Bennoch seldom attempted to versify the Stock Exchange or the City Street. His scenery was generally that rural scenery amidst which his boyhood was spent: his poetry is not business poetified, it is an escape into poetry from business. He is, like Burns, a singing poet: he wrote songs, and meant them to be sung; and even when the song has not that technical form, we often find the spirit of singing in the language. But let us have a few specimens. Here is a thoughtful passage from the little poem "Life." The handling is light, but the writer's self is in it:

Some may despise life,—folly defies life:
Oh, cherish it dearly, for brief is its stay!
Stand to it bravely, joyfully, gravely,—
Life is a game that's pleasant to play!

In the following Nightingale Song there is a richer and more sonorous beauty, and the form and sound recall the melody of the nightingale itself:

Come, come, come!
You know where the lindens bloom?

Come, come, come,
 And drink their sweet perfume !
 Meet me, beloved, beneath their shade,
 When day into night begins to fade ;
 Time for wooing and wooing made
 Is the twilight's deepening gloom.
 Come, come, come,
 My sweetest one, come, come !

Wait, wait, wait !
 I will come unto thee betimes ;
 Wait, wait, wait !
 I will come with the evening chimes.
 I will come when, shimmering up the sky,
 The wavering light retreats on high,
 And darkening shadows brooding lie
 Beneath the odorous limes.
 Wait, wait, wait !
 Beloved one, wait, wait !

Were this song set to adequate music, how exquisitely it might be rendered by a woman's sympathetic voice ! There is a delicate aroma of passion in it, not unworthy of the tender beauty of a midsummer night's dream.

One poem, at least, in this collection has a personal history and interest which make it of value, in addition to the noble and rugged strength that marks every line of it. The story was told to the present writer by Bennoch himself, and, omitting the names, it may be outlined here. Two friends, both also friends of the poet, had quarrelled. It was one of those quarrels in which no serious wrong-doing has been involved on either side, but a sentiment of pride keeps back the reconciliation which either party secretly desires. With the aim of bringing about such a reconciliation, Bennoch wrote, under the impulse of strong feeling, the following verses, and sent them to the estranged friends. He enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his appeal successful ; the men met, and forgiveness was exchanged. Poetry can serve few ends higher than this. In order to the full appreciation of the poem, one should have heard it repeated, as I did, by the author himself. He was a man delightful to look upon, stalwart and sturdy, with a broad, ruddy countenance framed in white hair and beard, and black eyes full of fire and tenderness. As he read, his resonant voice vibrated in sympathy with the thought, and he ended with tears glistening on his eyelashes. It is all characteristic of him,—a man justly loved and honored by all who knew him.

Hast thou a friend ? Oh, hold him fast ;
 Fling not his hand away :
 Thou of a treasure art possessed
 Thou'l not find every day.
 Oh, let no hasty word or look
 Blot out his name from memory's book !

A friend ! to man the noblest gift
 That Heaven has in its power,
 Stronger than death, and yet—most strange !—
 Feebler than frailest flower ;
 For that which braved the storm severe
 May yet be blighted by a sneer !

He may have errors,—who has not?
 Who dares perfection claim?
 God gave thy friend some worthy parts,—
 Fix all thy heart on them!
 His virtues rightly drawn, I ween
 His faults in shade will not be seen!

If thou wouldest keep thy friend thine own,
 Be open,—be sincere!
 What thou unto thyself art known,
 That to thy friend appear.
 'Twixt him and thee have no disguise;
 In this true friendship's secret lies.

Thou hast a friend! Oh, hold him fast;
 Fling not his hand away:
 Thou of a treasure art possessed
 That's not found every day.
 Oh, let no hasty word or look
 Blot thy friend's name from thy heart's book!

Every word tells: the composition is moving, elevated, and simple. It is Bennoch's own voice, and, to my thinking, there is nothing in the book better worth listening to. But the book is one which, more than most books, is a companion. It is alive; there is a heart in it that can beat and bleed. Its faults are warm, human faults, not the labored monstrosities of starved or morbid minds. It is no wonder that some of the poems it contains made its author friends among the leading men and women of a generation now passing away. In the preface, several of these famous names are enumerated; but there is none that does not gain brightness by association with that of Francis Bennoch. In England and Scotland the book has already had the success that is best worth having; and with us in America it should find more, and more hearty, lovers than even there.

Julian Hawthorne.

"A DIPLOMAT'S DIARY."

Ten years hence, when ten thousand hack writers are making inventories of the goods of the nineteenth century, it is to be hoped they will not overlook the American girl. In our own generation she has become an international question, thanks largely to Mr. Henry James, on whose soul, by the bye, the sin of writing "Daisy Miller" must rest with crushing weight. When sojourning across the water one naturally feels it a patriotic duty to repudiate the nationality of that startling creature, yet at home it is impossible to deny her; she looks so much worse in print than she does in a becoming lawn dress. Yes, she is an American, no doubt, but not *the* American girl. That portrait has yet to be painted; the type to be established beyond dispute. Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, and Cleveland have produced "professional" beauties; but will Boston admit that the American girl does not live on Beacon Hill? It is the part of gallantry to say that she is everywhere abroad on this continent; that we have seen her in Chicago, in Galveston, in Savannah, and in Portland; that verily she is omnipresent as well as omnipotent.

It is strange, then, that we meet with her so seldom in fiction. There is no mistaking her when we do; and we are gladdened at sight of her, for in-

stance, in Julien Gordon's story of "A Diplomat's Diary." Here there is a speaking likeness drawn deftly. Not everything about the presence or the present of Mrs. Acton is pleasing, and some of her past is deplorable. But the charm is there, and the secret of it is made manifest. She is so all-sufficient unto herself that her lover, a German nobleman, whose business it is to know men and women and who has always hated Americans, is sometimes troubled with vague doubts. But we who know her manner and understand her moods accept her without questioning. Small wonder she walks a queen in the Winter Palace; when of the proper sort the American girl is royal, peerless, irresistible. But not impregnable, thank God. This one succumbs at St. Petersburg, though, to be sure, the siege is long and every inch of the ground gained by the foreign foe is stubbornly contested. Little good the victory does him: her retreat is masterly.

The portrait of the American girl in this novel is not its only though it is its most admirable feature. The story it relates is fresh and well worth the telling. And it is told with a skill that promises better things and makes piquant its pseudonymous authorship.

Melville Philips.

NEW BOOKS.

[The readers of LIPPINCOTT'S will find in this department, from month to month, such concise and critical notice of all noteworthy publications, of which extended reviews are not given elsewhere in the magazine, as will enable them to keep in touch with the world of new books.]

Fiction.—*A COQUETTE'S LOVE* ("*Notre Cœur*"), by Guy de Maupassant (Belford Co.). A good translation of a readable but not pleasing novel. It is an artistic painting of a familiar French situation, and of course Maupassant makes the most of it. But we have had enough of women like Mme. de Burue.—*EXPATRIATION*, by the author of "*Aristocracy*" (D. Appleton & Co.). The author has improved in manner, the present novel showing a self-restraint that was deplorably lacking in "*Aristocracy*." English nobility is amusingly caricatured.—*MADAME DE MAURESCAMP*, by Octave Feuillet, translated by Beth Page (Lippincott). A typical tale of French life, written in M. Feuillet's happiest style, and admirably rendered into English.—*THE AZTEC TREASURE-HOUSE*, by Thomas A. Janvier (Harper & Brothers). The author finds as good material for fiction in Mexico as his master, Mr. Rider Haggard, found in Africa. The story is excellently told.—*THE RAG-PICKER OF PARIS*, by Félix Pyat, translated and published by Benj. R. Tucker (Boston). Mr. Tucker achieved a certain reputation by his translation of Tolstoi's "*Kreutzer Sonata*." This second venture is not so well timed.—*ARMOREL OF LYONNESSE*, by Walter Besant (Harper & Brothers). One of Mr. Besant's most delightful romances, an idyl on an island.—*VIERA, A ROMANCE 'TWIXT THE REAL AND IDEAL*, by Roman I. Zubof (The American News Co.). This new edition contains a life and portrait of the author, who attained to notoriety during his recent sojourn in Boston.—*THE RIVERSONS*, by S. J. Bumstead (Welch, Fracker Co.). A quiet story having particular interest for Philadelphians. In the end we are told that, "As for Dr. Sydney Ransom and his

charming wife, they are still living in Manayunk."—**PIERRE ET CAMILLE**, by Alfred de Musset, edited by O. B. Super (D. C. Heath & Co.).—**THE SOUL OF PIERRE**, translated from the French of Georges Ohnet by Mary J. Serrano (Cassell Publishing Co.). An artist's escape from the thraldom of a beautiful wicked woman, delicately and forcefully related.

History and Biography.—**SOCIETY IN THE ELIZABETHAN AGE**, by Hubert Hall (Macmillan & Co.). A new edition of a valuable work. Mr. Hall submits cogent evidence for a fresh and more favorable estimate of the character of Darrell, hitherto the infamous Lord of Littlecote.—**CLIVE**, by Sir Charles Wilson (Macmillan & Co.). This monograph is one of the best in the English Men of Action series.—**MARIE ANTOINETTE AND THE END OF THE OLD RÉGIME**, translated from the French of Imbert Saint-Amand by Thomas Sergeant Perry (Charles Scribner's Sons). With this volume M. Saint-Amand completes his highly-entertaining study of French court-life under Louis XVI. The author's excessive devotion to the memory of Marie Antoinette renders his elaborate account of the affair of the diamond necklace altogether untrustworthy.—**LOCKE**, by Prof. Alexander Campbell Fraser (Lippincott). A short and pleasant cut to an adequate understanding of Locke's famous essay and its relation to succeeding systems of philosophy.—**MADAGASCAR; OR, ROBERT DRURY'S JOURNAL DURING FIFTEEN YEARS' CAPTIVITY ON THAT ISLAND**, edited by Captain S. P. Oliver (Macmillan & Co.). It is now made clear that much of this charming record of adventure is fiction pure and simple. Nevertheless Drury actually lived for a number of years in Madagascar, and the present reprint of his spicy narrative is the best of reading.—**THE JEWS UNDER ROMAN RULE**, by W. D. Morrison (G. P. Putnam's Sons). This praiseworthy contribution to the Story of the Nations series supplements the excellent volume by Prof. James K. Hosmer, and deals with the most momentous epoch in the world's history, a period of three hundred years, embracing the origin and primitive organization of the Christian faith.

Poetry.—**LORD IVELY, AN EPIC POEM IN XIV. BOOKS**, by John Heddaeus (John B. Alden). It is well the author labelled this an epic poem, since its character as such would hardly have been suspected by the most critical reader. But it lacks rhythm, rhyme, and reason, as well as epopee.—**THE LIGHT OF ASIA**, by Edwin Arnold (Rand, McNally & Co.). A new edition, with explanatory notes by Mrs. I. L. Hauser.—**SELECTIONS FROM HEINE'S POEMS**, edited, with notes, by Horatio Stevens White (D. C. Heath & Co.). A commendable text-book.

Miscellaneous.—**THE TRUE AND THE FALSE**, by A. C. Dixon (Wharton, Barron & Co., Baltimore). A spirited attack on Roman Catholic doctrine by a Protestant clergyman.—**DELSARTE RECITATION BOOK AND DIRECTORY**, edited by Elsie M. Wilbor (Edgar S. Werner, New York). A well-selected volume of prose and verse.—**THE ETHICAL PROBLEM**, by Dr. Paul Carus (The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago). Three thoughtful lectures.—**THREE LECTURES ON THE SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE**, by F. Max Müller (The Open Court Publishing Co.). Prof. Müller adheres to his Aryan hypothesis. This aside, there is abundance of entertainment and instruction for the general reader in this little volume.

CURRENT NOTES.

"A PECK of dirt each person must eat before he dies" is how the old adage reads; but a peck of poison would come nearer the truth. The liver is the great blood-purifier; but working incessantly twenty-four hours a day, and three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, it cannot cast out all the filth and poison taken into the system through the lungs and stomach, chiefly the stomach. Sickness and death still go on, and will as long as people ignorantly or unwisely feed the system with drug-tainted food and foul air. The antipathy of most people to drugs is almost universal, and yet they countenance the placing of drug-tainted food upon them, and actually support the manufacturers of poison and filth. That drugs do harm must be conceded; that they seldom cure is substantiated truth; but food producers, for the sake of added strength, or to otherwise cheapen an article, will use as an ingredient some foul, filthy drug, and the public, either through want of knowledge or for the sake of supposed economy, make daily use of this product, and suffer from its cumulative effect. Many illnesses can be prevented, and people sincerely should set about to do this thing. What can be done? Take into the stomach no more poison; remove the cause, and the effect will cease. Your system is fully saturated with poison already. Take at least one step toward health. Aim at purity, instead of poison. It is a law of the universe that there are causes for all things. It is folly for a man to affirm that the food he eats has nothing to do with the sickness of to-day or to-morrow. The danger lies in the effect not being immediate. It isn't the grain of poison to-day, but the cumulative power of these drugs: a system is gradually, but surely, undermined, and the poor dupe of "food grumbler" becomes the bedridden invalid, or the sure dyspeptic. The person who is a dyspeptic is in a sense as much disgraced as the man who is drunk. It is a crime to be dyspeptic, for dyspepsia causes more human misery, more intemperance, more ill-temper, more domestic squabbles, than anything in the world. It is inexcusable, for man is his own physician, and if he will wantonly tamper with his digestive organs and systematically introduce into his stomach poison, he must reap the bitter consequences. There is no article of human diet that enters more largely into our daily food than baking powder. More than two-thirds of the powder placed upon the market is adulterated with some filthy or poisonous substance, as ammonia and alum. It is a blessing to humanity when the statements of noted chemists and physicians throughout the country testify to the purity and wholesomeness of one powder, declaring it free from all deleterious substances. It is Dr. Price's Cream Baking Powder, and should be found in every home in the country where health and happiness are desired.

WESTWARD Ho!—All those whose eyes are turned hopefully towards the West, unto which, as Bishop Berkeley puts it, "the course of empire takes its way," will read with interest an article upon Portland, Oregon, which immediately follows "Current Notes." The rapid development of the Pacific Northwest within the past few years is one of the astonishing facts of our history. The emigration that is now filling Oregon and Washington with settlers is the released accumulation of ten years behind the natural barrier of the arid region of the Missouri Valley. The Pacific Northwest is getting the emigration of twenty years in two or three. Emigrants are fast leaving the Dakotas, Kansas and Nebraska, and even Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, and Wisconsin, for more advantageous settlements in Oregon and Washington, so that the Pacific Northwest has more than doubled in population within the last five years.

On account of the favorable commercial position of Portland, of its charming climate, and of the infinite variety and richness of the natural resources of the surrounding territory, it bids fair to become one of the most important cities of the United States. By the last census, Portland with its suburbs has a population of about seventy thousand, and has become the site of a trade and commerce greater in proportion to population than that of any other city in the country. It is more than probable that within the next five years Portland will more than double her present population, and so more nearly approach in the number of her inhabitants the rank that is due her as a commercial centre.

It is stated in the article mentioned that those who may desire detailed information as to the city of Portland or the Pacific Northwest may obtain the same without cost, by addressing the Oregon Immigration Board, Portland, Oregon.

REDFERN, "the" ladies' tailor, seems to enjoy a monopoly in making the "going away" gowns of royal brides, the latest example being that of the Princess Louise, now Duchess of Fife; in addition to this gown, the Princess of Wales's "pet" tailor contributed nearly a dozen garments to the young princess's trousseau.

ONE of Reed & Carnick's extensive factories at Goshen, N.Y., was destroyed by fire on the 10th inst. This factory was devoted wholly to the production of their Soluble Food and Lacto-Preparata, and contained extensive and valuable machinery. They had considerable stock of these Foods at their New York office, and consequently there will be no delay in filling orders. The factory will be at once rebuilt three times the size of the one burned, with machinery correspondingly enlarged.—*Dietetic Gazette*.

THE phenomenal success of Durkee's Salad Dressing as an article of food is abundant proof of its intrinsic merit, and warrants any word of praise we can offer. No disappointment follows the use of this unrivalled preparation; and, as it will keep in good condition for years, we are sure all good housekeepers will save themselves labor, time, money, and patience by providing themselves with this economical luxury.

A single trial will demonstrate its value.

"Beware of all imitations."

TAXING THE VOCAL ORGANS by out-door speaking or any other unusual and violent exertion is liable to result in great injury, unless a prompt and effective anodyne is used to counteract the evil. For this purpose no other preparation equals Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. It not only heals the organs of speech when they are inflamed, but gives them increased strength and flexibility. Public speakers, preachers, auctioneers, singers, lawyers, actors, and all whose success in their calling depends greatly on the strength, clearness, and staying qualities of the voice, find Ayer's Cherry Pectoral invaluable.

"Upon several occasions I have suffered from colds, causing hoarseness and entire loss of voice. In my profession of an auctioneer, any affection of the voice or throat is a serious matter, but at each attack I have been relieved by a few doses of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. This remedy, with ordinary care, has worked such a magical effect that I have suffered very little inconvenience. I have also used it in my family, with very excellent results, in coughs, colds, etc. In my general storekeeping business I find a steadily-increasing demand for this medicine, which fact is a certain proof of public appreciation."—WM. H. QUARTLY, *Minlaton, Australia.*

Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Sold by druggists. \$1; six bottles, \$5.

You may have tried a score of preparations called "sarsaparilla," without receiving any benefit; but do not be discouraged. Had you taken Ayer's Sarsaparilla in the first place, you would have been cured and saved time and money. It is not yet too late. Ayer's Sarsaparilla does not exhilarate for a while, and then leave the patient more prostrated than before; it produces a radical change in the system, such as no other preparation, claiming to be a blood medicine, can effect. Original—best—cheapest. Try Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

"I was cured of nervous debility in the summer of 1888 by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla."—MRS. H. BENOIT, 6 Middle St., Pawtucket, R.I.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla, prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Sold by all druggists. Price \$1; six bottles, \$5. Worth \$5 a bottle.



THE GAVOTTE AND THE BOURRÉE.—The gavotte and the bourrée can be variously assigned to Spain and France for their origin; but the jig—homely appellation!—can be clearly traced to a most respectable antiquity. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the name was variously written *gigue*, *giga*, and *geig*, and signified simply “the fiddle dance,” from the German *geige*, “a violin.” We hear of these *gigues*, or “fiddle dances,” as early as the days of the wandering minstrels, the peculiarity of them being an entire license of step, so that the most untalented performer could join in. They became fashionable among the upper classes at the Watteau fêtes of Louis the Fifteenth’s time, but were naturally danced with considerably more elegance than their primitive form required. They still retained, however, their miscellaneous character, and, far from any symmetry of motion being demanded, the *gigue* was not correctly executed unless several varieties of step were represented among the dancers. It was, in fact, “a medley.”

We can scarcely over-estimate the influence of Lully, the *chef d’orchestre* of Louis the Fourteenth, on the art of dancing. His band, which was known as “the twenty-four violins,” was required to furnish all the music for the fêtes and balls of the brilliant court to which it was attached. The gavotte and the bourrée have been ascribed to him, but probably without reason. The cotillon, however, has a more legitimate claim to such a paternity, and most likely was at least perfected in the brilliant ball-rooms of Versailles.—*The National Review.*

THE HIVE AND ITS ANALOGIES.—The hive is analogous to human society, in that the male sex has the best part of existence, the most comfortable and favorable lot. Let us see. The drones are “the lazy fathers of th’ industrious hive.” The queen is the one and only fully-developed female in each hive, but there are, at a certain season, a vast number of idle gentlemen lounging around. The community in a hive consists generally, in the midst of summer, of from thirty thousand to forty thousand bees, and of these perhaps fifteen hundred may be drones. They are known at a glance by their burly, heavy appearance, and a closer examination shows that they have neither the stings nor the leg-baskets which distinguish the working and struggling members of the community. The drones fly out when they like, but not to gather honey. This they eat, at their luxurious pleasure, out of the cells where the workers store it up. They do nothing whatever in the hive to earn their keep. They may be seen lazily and aimlessly strolling about, as though with their hands in their pockets, or propping themselves up in convenient spots and going off to sleep for hours together. The one purpose for which they are called into being is to accept the handkerchief, if, by chance or favor, it is thrown them by the queen.

This does not seem so bad, does it? Methinks I have seen perhaps one or two, or say three, male human creatures who might not object to take the post of drone in a Socialist State. But softly; all is not yet told. The black side of the life of a drone must now be displayed.

The drones are produced only during that short season of the year when swarming takes place; that is to say, the earliest comers of their kind hatch out of the eggs about the end of April. Before three months have elapsed from that date not a drone is to be seen. All are dead; and nearly all have been killed with the most barbarous cruelty.—*The National Review.*

HARRIET HUBBARD AYER, 305 Fifth Avenue, New York.
 The Récamier Toilet Preparations, Concentrated Odors for the
 Handkerchief, Scented Waters, Dentifrices,
 etc.

Récamier Cream, for Tan, Sunburn, or
 Pimples.

Récamier Lotion, for Removing Moth
 and Freckles.

Récamier Balm, a Beautifier Pure and Simple.

Récamier Powder, will Not Make the Face Shine.

Récamier Soap, Delicate, Healing, and Pure.

Famous all over the world as the best and most efficacious
 compounds ever manufactured for sale; used and endorsed by the
 most beautiful women of every country.

Voluntary testimonials from Mesdames Adelina Patti Nicolini,
 Langtry, Modjeska, Bernhardt, Clara Louise Kellogg, Potter,
 and thousands of others.

Sold by Dealers in Toilet Articles throughout the United
 States and Canada.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Mrs. Ayer begs to announce her return
 from Europe and the arrival of the most beautiful and artistic
 goods of their kind ever imported to this country.

Exquisite examples in Ivory, Silver, Tortoise-Shell, Porcelain,
 Crystal, Gold Bronze, etc., in Objects of Art for the Toilet Table
 and Boudoir. Sachets of every size and description.

These goods have been especially designed and manufactured
 for Mrs. Ayer, and will not be found elsewhere. Unique, artistic,
 and beautiful as Holiday Gifts.



TRADE MARK.

HARRIET HUBBARD AYER,
 305 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

SOME SLANG WORDS AND PHRASES.—“Dun” is a word now whose meaning is known to every one who understands the English language. About the beginning of the century a constable in England named John Dun became celebrated as a first-class collector of bad accounts. When others would fail to collect a bad debt, Dun would be sure to get it out of the debtor. It soon passed into a current phrase that when a person owed money and did not pay when asked, he would have to be “Dunned.” Hence it soon became common in such cases to say, “You will have to Dun So-and-so if you wish to collect your money.”

Until the nomination of Franklin Pierce for the Presidency, the word “outsider” was unknown. The committee on credentials came in to make its report, and could not get into the hall because of the crowd of people who were not members of the convention. The chairman of the convention asked if the committee was ready to report, and the chairman of the committee answered, “Yes, Mr. Chairman, but the committee is unable to get inside, on account of the crowd and pressure of the outsiders.” The newspaper reporters took up the word and used it.

“You are a daisy,” is used by Dickens in “David Copperfield” in the sense of calling a person a daisy in a way to express admiration and at the same time to laugh at one’s credulity. Steerforth says to young Copperfield, “David, my daisy, you are so innocent of the world. Let me call you my daisy, as it is so refreshing to find one in these corrupt days so innocent and unsophisticated. My dear Copperfield, the daisies of the field are not fresher than you.”

“Too thin” was given currency by the Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, in the United States Congress, in 1870. Some members had made a reply to Mr. Stephens, and the latter had his chair wheeled out in the aisle, and said, in that shrill piping voice which always commanded silence, “Mr. Speaker, the gentleman’s arguments are gratuitous assertions made up of whole cloth,—and cloth, sir, so gauzy and thin that it will not hold water. It is entirely too thin, sir.”—*American Notes and Queries*.

WHO WROTE THE PENNY-DREADFULS?—A goodly proportion of them began life in the unambitious capacities of compositors, reporters, and hangers-on of the newspaper press. One well-known personage of this class began what in moments of confidence he delights to style his “literary career” when acting as shopman to a second-hand bookseller in a manufacturing town of the Midlands. Another distinguished person of the same type translates dubious French novels on week-days, and on Sundays actually officiates as minister in some sort of dissenting chapel. A third was a village school-master in Scotland, while of a fourth a curious anecdote was told a few years ago in a monthly magazine. “A friend of the writer,” said the magazinist, “has in his service a housemaid whose father writes novels for a Fleet Street publisher from ten to four daily.” A still more amusing illustration of the social status of some of our popular instructors was lately related by a lady, the wife of a well-known physician. Her cook having repeatedly neglected to send up the dinner with the punctuality which is desirable in a well-ordered household, she remonstrated with some sharpness, and, to her astonishment, was informed that the young person in question was so much occupied with the novel she was writing that she had been unable to pay due attention to her duties in the kitchen.—*The Quarterly Review*.

PATTI**"TELLS THE SECRET."**

HOFFMAN HOUSE, NEW YORK, April 24, 1890.

TO THE IMPERIAL HAIR REGENERATOR COMPANY:

Gentlemen,—So much has been said in the newspapers about the color of my hair, I deem it but just to say it is your Imperial Hair Regenerator which I have been and am now using. I found the Court Hair-dresser in London was applying it to ladies in high social position, and I first had it applied by him, and now, during my stay in New York, I have had the application renewed by you.

The result has been beyond my highest expectation. The color obtained is most beautiful, uniform, and, best of all, I find it harmless. Your preparation has my cordial recommendation. I believe there is nothing in the world for the hair like it.

Adelina Patti Nicolini.

SEND US A SAMPLE OF YOUR HAIR AND WE WILL REGENERATE IT FREE. YOU CAN THEN JUDGE OF ITS MERITS.

The following are the colors, which are all perfect: No. 1, Black; 2, Dark Brown; 3, Medium Brown; 4, Chestnut; 5, Light Chestnut; 6, Gold Blonde; 7, Ash Blonde. Sold by all druggists and hair-dressers, in \$1.50 and \$3.00 sizes, or direct from

THE IMPERIAL CHEMICAL COMPANY,

54 West Twenty-Third Street, New York.

We make applications reasonably at our Reception-Rooms, opposite the Eden Musée, or at ladies' residences.

AMBERGRIS.—The word *ambergris* is French, and signifies “gray amber,” but by whom or when first applied to this marine phenomenon we have not been able to discover.

The scientific explanation of the nature of ambergris is that it is the product of some disease in the sperm whale analogous to gall-stones. It is found sometimes in the intestines of the creature, but more frequently is found, after expulsion, floating on the surface of tropical seas. It floats in masses which have a speckled-gray appearance, and mixed with which are generally found some remnants of the known food of whales.

The best quality of ambergris is soft and waxy, but it is said not to be uniform in color. The streaky or marked specimens are preferred. It is opaque and inflammable, remarkably light as to specific gravity, as may be understood from its always keeping on the surface, and it is rugged to the touch.

Most of what comes into the market is found near the Bahama Islands, but it is also found at the Moluccas and other parts of the Indian Ocean, off a portion of the coast of South America, and sometimes floating on the Atlantic Ocean.

The essential characteristic of ambergris is its powerful and peculiar odor. It is so peculiar that art has never been able to imitate it, although the scarcity and enormous price of ambergris have lent every stimulus to invention. It is so powerful and diffusive that the very minutest quantity is perceptible in the most fragrant perfumes.

The chief component of ambergris is a fatty matter called *ambrein*, which is obtained by boiling in alcohol. This *ambrein*—and there is said to be about eighty-five per cent. of it in the best ambergris—is what gives it its value, for it is in this ingredient that the perfume lies.

There is another peculiarity ascribed to ambergris, and that is the power to exalt the flavor and perfume of other substances with which it is brought into combination. Thus, a grain or two rubbed down with sugar is often added to a hogshead of wine, giving a perceptible and what is considered by some an improved flavor to the whole. And a small particle of ambergris added to other perfumes is found to exalt the odor of the blend.

In fact, ambergris is too dear to use alone, and it is so dear that it is one of the most adulterated articles known to chemists. It is adulterated both by those who export it and in the countries in which it is used.—*Chambers's Journal*.

CHAINED BOOKS.—As late as the year 1751 notices occur in the librarian's account-books of procuring additional chains for the library. But the removal of them appears to have commenced as shortly afterwards as 1757, and in 1761 there was a payment for unchaining fourteen hundred and forty-eight books at one halfpenny each. In 1769 some long chains were sold at twopence each and short ones at three halfpence, and then *en masse* nineteen hundredweight of “old iron” at fourteen shillings per hundredweight. Several of the chains are still preserved loose, as relics.—*Murray's Annals of the Bodleian Library*.

ST. JEROME'S EYE-GLASSES.—In the church of Ogni Santi, in Florence, is a fresco of Domenico Ghirlandajo representing St. Jerome, and dated 1480. The saint, apparently in the agonies of composing a sermon, is seated at a table on which is a wooden desk. An ink-horn, a pair of scissors, and a *pince-nez* are hanging from tacks or pegs nailed into the side of the desk. The *pince-nez* is small and handleless; the glasses are round and framed in dark bone; in the bridge, also of bone, is a hinge.—*Notes and Queries*.

A
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THE
BRAIN
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NERVES.

CROSBY'S VITALIZED PHOSPHITES, prepared according to the formula of Prof. Percy, from the *brain of the ox*, and the *germ of the wheat and oat*.

It is identical in its composition with *brain-matter*, is rapidly absorbed, and quickly relieves the *depression from intellectual efforts, overwork, nervous prostration, indigestion, and sleeplessness*.

It strengthens the *intellect*, restores *lost functions*, and increases the capacity for *labor*. It aids in the *bodily* and *mental* development of children.

It is the best preventive known for *Night-Sweats* and *Consumption*.

It is used by the best physicians in the treatment of neuritic diseases.

It is a *Vital, Nutrient Phosphite*, not an inert Acid Phosphate.

The eminent professor of a well-known theological seminary writes, "I find it very useful for *Brain-weariness*, and have occasion often to recommend it to our students."

It is not a secret remedy; the formula is on every bottle.

Descriptive pamphlet free, on application to F. Crosby Co., 56 West Twenty-Fifth Street, New York.

A WISE COMBINATION.—Nobody ought to appreciate the value of Life Insurance more than the productive and thrifty classes that invest in Building Associations and by thus combining little sums largely develop and increase the number of homes and their comforts. To all who live through the usual period required to mature investments thus made, it is doubtful whether anything offers superior attractions to a Building Association. As is well known, however, many men engage in an undertaking of this kind who do not live to realize the investment. Death cuts short their attempt to accumulate, and herein Life Insurance wisely ekes out and supplements what they had designed to do. If one has a given number of shares in a Building Association, he ought to have as collateral with it a policy of Life Insurance which shall decrease each year in amount and cost in proportion to the deposits and accumulations made in the Building Association. For instance, if he have shares enough to produce for him \$3000 at the end of ten years, and his investments in consequence are at the rate, allowing for accumulations, say, of \$300 per year, he ought the first year to be insured for \$3000, the second year for \$2700, the third year for \$2400, etc., so that when his investments matured at the end of ten years, the insurance would expire. In this way, should he die, all that he designed to save is at once paid to his representatives, whether he live six months or nine years,—whether he has paid but one month's dues or more.

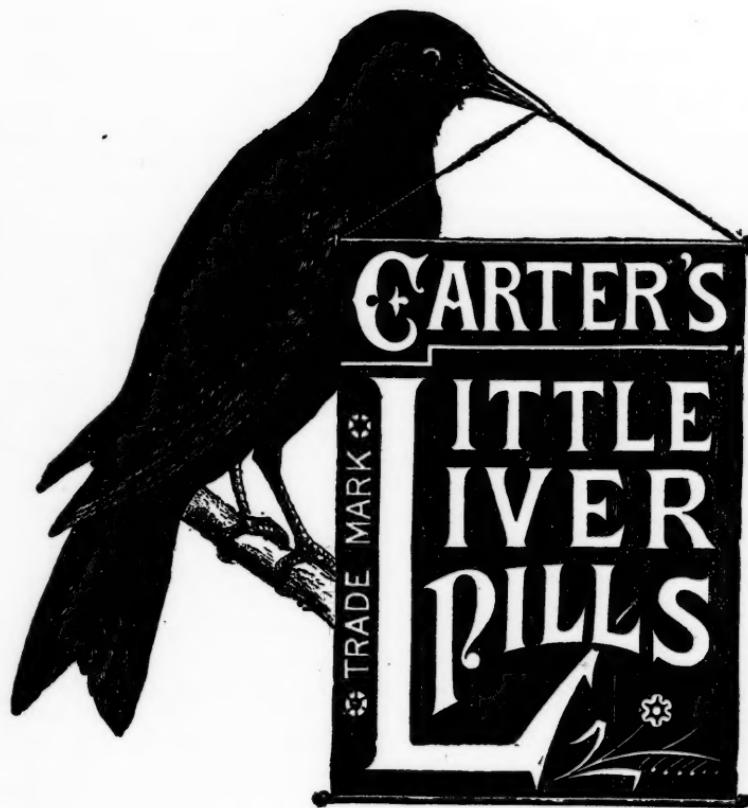
One may get accurate information in detail as to THE VERY MODERATE cost of this form of insurance by applying in person or by letter to The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, 921, 923, and 925 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

ENGLISH COURT ETIQUETTE.—Etiquette is the very life and health of a court. It is observed even in the arrangement of seats. On each side of the small low dais intended exclusively for royalty are rows of chairs which, I was told, were definitely and clearly assigned, not by law, but by absolute although unwritten custom, to the different orders in the social scale who accept the queen's invitation. No one but those prescribed might occupy them. Thus, on one side are duchesses and marchionesses; on the other, ambassadressess and ladies of the Corps Diplomatique. It was my good fortune to witness a very pretty and graceful little ceremony in connection with these distinctions, when a young and beautiful bride arrived, who within the last few months had become a duchess. This was her first appearance as such at a court ball, and she was making her way diffidently toward the position to which her newly-acquired rank entitled her, when the whole of the duchesses present rose simultaneously to greet their sister peeress and to receive her into their circle.

What makes the court ball so well worth seeing is the fact that almost everybody in the room has some well-grounded claim to distinction. My own, I will admit, was but reflected lustre, and I entered paradise under the wing of others, like the rest of the *débutantes*. But these others represented all that is most notable and prominent in London. Social rank of all the higher grades was fully represented, wealth where it was associated with meritorious money-getting, distinguished service to the State, and high professional repute. Nothing proved this better than the brilliant display of decorations, the constellations of stars, crosses, and medals, all attesting the presence of every degree of merit and every form of celebrity. Little less distinguished, but from extreme contrast, was the plain, almost homely, black dress suit of the American minister, who, of course, wore no decorations whatever. He was the only man there thus simply attired, the type of a great republic which acknowledges no kind of distinction but that of personal merit, and perhaps, so my father says, thinks more of such baubles than the most aristocratic nation in the world.—*Murray's Magazine*.

THE AMERICAN GIRL.—On the other side of the Atlantic it is no new thing for a young woman to come before the world, to cut out for herself a successful and honorable career, and to sacrifice all other considerations to the development of her individuality. In America there is no aristocracy but that of wealth; no one inherits distinction, it must be won; and a passionate wish naturally arises to make one's mark in one's own day and generation. As a rule, the tendency is towards an artistic or a professional career, but of late years it has set towards fashion.

So if the French soldier's knapsack carries the legendary *bâton*, the trunk of the American girl contains the possible blue ribbon of the turf, to be won by her in the race for fashionable distinction. And her ambition meets with sympathy. For when the professional beauty, after due study of the "Almanach de Gotha" and of the "British Peerage," leaves her home, her conquests are applauded not only by her family, but by whole cities, townships, and States, who have watched her preliminary canters, and who invest not a little of their vanity in her triumphs. The more sober and valuable achievements of American women as sculptors, singers, artists, actresses, lecturers, and doctors are of worldwide renown; for if America has produced Charlotte Cushman, Harriet Hosmer, Mary Anderson, and Marie Van Zandt, society in both hemispheres has fallen down and worshipped them.—*The Edinburgh Review*.



positively cure SICK HEADACHE. They also relieve distress from Dyspepsia, Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side.

Purely vegetable. Sugar-coated. Do not gripe or sicken. **SMALL PRICE.**
SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE.

CARTER MEDICINE Co., New York City.

THREE.—There is much superstitious regard for the number three in the popular mind, and the third repetition of anything is generally looked upon as a crisis. Thus, an article may twice be lost and recovered, but the third time that it is lost it is gone for good. Twice a man may pass through some great danger in safety, but the third time he loses his life. If, however, the mystic third can be successfully passed, all is well. Three was called by Pythagoras the perfect number, and we frequently find its use symbolical of Deity: thus, we might mention the trident of Neptune, the three-forked lightning of Jove, and the three-headed dog of Pluto. The idea of trinity is not confined to Christianity, but occurs in several religions.

In mythology, also, we find three Fates, three Furies, and three Graces; and, coming nearer to our own times, Shakespeare introduces his three witches. In public-house signs three seems to play an important part, for we frequently meet with "Three Cups," "Three Jolly Sailors," "Three Bells," "Three Tuns," "Three Feathers,"—in fact, that number of almost anything of which a fertile imagination can conceive a trio. In nursery rhymes and tales this number is not unknown; and if we look back to the days of our childhood, most of us will call to mind the three wise men of Gotham who took a sea-voyage in a bowl, not to mention the three blind mice that had their tails cut off by the farmer's wife. Perhaps there is some occult power in the number which governs the division of novels into three volumes and induces doctors to order their medicine to be taken thrice daily. It is said that some tribes of savages cannot count beyond three; but, although they may have no words to express higher numbers, perhaps we should be scarcely justified in assuming that they are incapable of appreciating the value of the latter.—*Chambers's Journal*.

THE REASON FOR CASTES.—How comes it that the Aryan race, which in South Europe, as Herr Penka has shown, has modified its physical type by free intermixture with Turanian elements, displayed in India a marked antipathy to marriage with persons of alien race, and devised an elaborate system of taboo for the prevention of such unions? An explanation may, perhaps, be found in the fact that in India alone were the Aryans brought into close contact with an unequivocal black race. The sense of differences of color, which, for all our talk of common humanity, still plays a great, and, politically, often an inconvenient, part in the history of the world, finds forcible expression in the Vedic descriptions of the people whom the Aryans found in possession of the plains of India. In a well-known passage the god Indra is praised for having protected the Aryan color, and the word meaning color (*varna*) is used down to the present day as the equivalent of caste, more especially with reference to the castes believed to be of Aryan descent. Another text depicts the Dasyus or Dravidians as noseless; others dwell on their low stature, their coarse features, and their voracious appetite. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that from these sources there might be compiled a fairly accurate anthropological definition of the Dravidian tribes of to-day. When it is added that the aggregates which would be included in the definition represent the lower end of a long series of social gradations which in their turn correspond not only to varieties of physical type, but also to peculiarities of custom and tribal structure, it is obviously but a short step to the conclusion that the motive principle of Indian caste is to be sought in the antipathy of the higher race for the lower, of the fair-skinned Aryan for the black Dravidian.—*The Contemporary Review*.

QUINA-LAROCHE.—This preparation has for its basis a combination of all the principles of the best cinchonas with a rich special wine; not, like many mixtures, an ordinary compound of drugs, but a result of laborious researches, which has won for its inventor a National Prize of 16,600 francs, and Gold Medals at the Expositions of Paris, Vienna, etc.

Quina-Laroche is *par excellence* the tonic with which to combat stomach affections, loss of appetite, mental depression, anaemia, etc. Quina-Laroche is a powerful preservative against intermittent and continued fevers rebellious to sulphate of quinine, and of exceptional value in cases of tardy convalescence; in combination with iron, is especially recommended for poorness of the blood, chlorosis, difficulties of assimilation, debility, &c. Prevents Influenza and La Grippe.



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ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.—And to enable every one to act his part well needs that he shall be in perfect health. The very best actors require prompting occasionally, and so it is with the functional parts of our bodies: they sometimes require prompting. A sluggish liver, impaired digestion, or weak stomach, if taken in time, only need a little prompting to set them right, but if neglected may lead to complications that will necessitate a physician's care. An article that has, comparatively speaking, been but recently introduced in America, is by far the best little prompter in all the aforementioned cases. We refer to Beecham's Pills, a staple article in England, having been before the British public for over fifty years, and already in great demand in every other English-speaking country throughout the world. These pills are really a wonderful medicine, arousing and strengthening the system and prompting every organ to the proper performance of its part. It has recently been shown that they are nine times more used in England than any other patent medicine and have the largest sale of any in the world. In fact, they are the World's Medicine. No home in America need be without this famous and inexpensive remedy, for, although they are proverbially pronounced to be "worth a guinea a box," they can be obtained of any druggist for twenty-five cents, or from the Sole Agents for the United States, B. F. Allen Co., 365 Canal Street, New York City, who will forward them to any address upon receipt of price.

ON NOVEL-WRITING.—No worse, but, on the contrary, far better, for being well written. To be well written it must be suitably written, and the style which is excellent for a sober, delicate, scientific story is not so excellent for a tale of adventure. Even the novel-publishing newspapers, as long as they get their weekly allowance of incident, do not grumble, probably because the language is good. Its excellence, however, depends on the matter. Elegant and rhythmic English and dainty and prolonged descriptions are not in place in a novel of romance; they cease to be in place as soon as the separate charm of the style becomes a rival to the interest of the story. A drama may have too much wit, though this is an uncommon fault, and a story, too, is marred when the attention, instead of being concentrated on the action, is claimed by the manner of the narration. Even in tales of analysis and science, one often sees that the author has paused and nibbled at his pen while he sought the best, or rather the most unexpected, word. This is actually a frequent vice in modern, especially, perhaps, in American, novels which aim at style. There are some readers who prefer these interruptions and delays; they think them proofs of delicacy and of exquisite care. This appears to me to be a fault in any work. Often, it is true, in Shakespeare, one is forced to stop and read again and again some passage, for the extraordinary, astonishing beauty of its manner. But we may be sure that Shakespeare did not stop as he wrote, and work the thing up—Shakespeare who “never blotted a line.” Of course passages may be “worked up,” and yet may show no sign of it. For example, there is a beautiful sentence in one of Izaak Walton’s “Lives,” which reads in its ample brevity as if it were quite spontaneous. But several rough copies of it, none of them good, are found on the fly-leaf of a book which had been in the possession of Izaak.

The error is to employ a research in style which is inappropriate and tardy. This is as much the fault of some good novels in the way of analysis as recklessness of taste and even of grammar is the fault of some books of adventure. The worst of it is that, to a good many persons, the fault in the former class appears a merit. When Mr. Stevenson, in his admirable “Master of Ballantrae,” makes the old Scotch steward talk about “the lurching reverberations of the firelight,” he drops, for once, into the error of style which is too often recognized as an excellence. At all events, the business of “heredity,” as in M. Zola’s long series of romances, can never, probably, be much admired by more than a passing fashion. Heredity is much too fleeting and peculiar in its manifestations to be seized scientifically. It is about as manageable as hypnotism, which is scientific, too, more or less, and is overworked and tedious. But a novel of heredity is usually thought scientific, while a novel of hypnotic influence is thought romantic. They are about equally scientific, and equally transient.—*Andrew Lang, in Longman’s Magazine.*



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SERVANTS IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME.—In the time of Shakespeare domestic service was in a state of transition ; the old system was decaying, the new one springing into life ; and, if one may be allowed to judge from casual references scattered throughout the plays of the poet, the new order does not appear to have been altogether satisfactory. In "King Lear"—to take one example—Kent denounces Oswald, the steward, as a " knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats ; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, worsted-stocking knave!" From Shakespeare's plays it further appears that the servants of the period were companions and confidants of their master, and that they were generally sly and pilfering and players of practical jokes. In great families it was customary for servants to take an oath of fidelity on their entrance into office. Posthumus alludes to this usage when he says of Imogene's servants,—

Her attendants are
All sworn and honorable.

The condition of servants at this period was, therefore, peculiar, and it is clear that they were ruled by a curious mixture of stern discipline and great laxity. One mode of enforcing obedience was by imposing forfeits or fines, some of which are enumerated by Sir J. Harrington in his "Nugae Antiquae." For being absent from prayers, for uttering an oath, for leaving a door open, or "for any follower visiting the cook," a fine was inflicted ; while in another set of rules it is provided that

If any one this rule doth break,
And eat more bread than he can eat,
Shall to the box one penny pay.

In case an offender should refuse to pay "direct without resistance," provision is made at the conclusion that

Each one here shall be assistance,
And he that doth refuse to aid,
By him one penny shall be paid.

Chambers's Journal.

EGYPTIAN OBJECTS IN WOOD.—A special feature of all collections of Egyptian antiquities is the excellent preservation of the objects in wood. Not only are the tools and implements in almost the same state as when last used by the artisans or husbandmen, but delicate little articles for the toilet or for some ornamental purpose retain their carving in all its pristine freshness. Thus, we have handed down an admirable example of the archaic type of the Hathor head in a mirror-handle of the twelfth dynasty, which when compared with those of a later period will serve as a useful illustration to the student of the history of Egyptian art. Representations of animals carved in wood of the same period show the careful study of nature of the early Egyptian artists, while the truthful rendering of form testifies that their system of technical education was sound and thorough. What would have been one of the most interesting specimens of wood-carving is, unfortunately, in a damaged condition : this is a palm-leaf capital from one of the private houses. In its original state it was probably painted ; in its present state, however, it is valuable as a proof of the antiquity of this form of capital.—*The Athenaeum.*

PORTLAND, OREGON.

THE mighty rush of immigration into the Pacific Northwest for the last two or three years is not accidental. It is the natural result of influences which have been in operation for a century past, but to which the last ten years have given the double force of reaction and accumulation. It is like nothing else in the history of the settlement of the country—barring the stampede to the California gold-fields—because the same conditions have never before existed in the history of the settlement of the continent.

Up to ten or fifteen years ago, the westward advance of the tide of emigration and settlement in the United States was constant and unchecked. The Atlantic coast overflowed upon the slope of the Alleghanies; the human stream ran down into the Ohio Valley and up along the shores of the Great Lakes; the Mississippi Valley absorbed the surplus for a generation; and it was not until the Missouri was passed that there began to be check, accumulation, and reaction.

For the first time since it left the Atlantic shore, the human migration found a region where it could neither subsist and multiply according to its wont, nor advance in a continuous course, occupying a fertile land as it went on. The wave of emigration broke itself on the arid plains of the Missouri, and there was check, accumulation, and return, until a new outlet was opened to a fairer land for the home-seeker than any living generation had known. Humanity was slow to learn the lesson. Thousands poured every year over the limits of natural fertility and filled the treeless and arid plains of the Dakotas, Western Nebraska, and Kansas, fighting against nature to subdue regions unsubduable and not worth conquest even if conquered.

For half a generation the unequal struggle went on. It is not to the present purpose to review either the vicissitudes or the results, except so far as they contribute to explain the present marvellous rush to the northwest coast. The emigration that is now filling Oregon and Washington with settlers is the released accumulation of ten years behind the natural barrier of the arid region of the Missouri Valley. When the westward impulse broke over this barrier, it brought with it not only the same native force that settled the middle West, but the stored-up energy of the years of obstruction.

The Pacific Northwest is getting the emigration of twenty years in two or three. The strongest and best of those who have been trying in vain to make homes in a land of a single crop and doubtful market, of polar winter and sirocco summer, are leaving the Dakotas, Kansas and Nebraska, and even Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, and Wisconsin, for Oregon and Washington. The enterprising but prudent home-seekers of the farther east, deterred from migration by the discouraging reports from the middle frontier, found hope and impetus in news of a fertile land on the Pacific, and to the natural and ordinary immigra-

tion of the few years since the Pacific Northwest became accessible have been added the accumulations of the years of obstruction on the middle frontier, and the reinforcement of the thousands who left homes in the East only to find disappointment in the interior, or who reluctantly remained in an overcrowded country awaiting news of a land worth the taking, until the movement to the North Pacific Coast has become like the rush of a stream through a broken dam.

The preliminary census tells an eloquent story of this transference of population. While the Pacific Northwest has more than doubled in five years, Iowa has lost, Kansas and Nebraska have but barely held their own, and the Dakotas count their gains from 1880 rather than from 1885. The source of their loss is the source of the gain in the Pacific Northwest. There is a wholesale migration unprecedented in the history of agricultural settlement in America.

The narrow limits of this article forbid the attempt to do more than to indicate in broad outline the physical and social features which constitute the peculiar attractiveness of the Pacific Northwest to home-seekers of all classes. Roughly, the region known as the Pacific Northwest, whose trade-centre and dominant city is Portland, extends from the Pacific Ocean to the Rocky Mountains, and from the British possessions to the northern boundary-line of California, embracing in unity of interests and common trade-relations about three hundred thousand square miles of territory, with a population at this time of about one million, more than half of whom are immigrants within the last five years.

The quality that distinguishes this region, beyond all others now open to settlement, is its almost infinite variety of capacity and diversity of production. Within the limits embraced is an empire of fertility, a little world of diversified production, including almost every known product of field, forest, or mine, with practically unlimited opportunities for commerce and industry.

Its salient physical features are the mountain ranges and spurs which divide the country into great and fertile valleys, watered by abundant rains in season, and a perfect net-work of rivers, the rich agricultural lands of which offer to the farmer a variety of crops which embraces the entire range of grains, grasses, fruits, and vegetables known to the temperate zone, with a never-failing certainty and abundance of yield known in no other section of the United States; while to the miner, lumberman, and manufacturer, the mountains and their foot-hills offer a mineral wealth covering, with one or two exceptions, the entire range of precious metals and useful minerals, and timber resources which are unsurpassed anywhere, offering, with the product of the farm and stock range, the raw material for almost every known branch of manufacture.

Portland, the imperial city, the commercial heart of this domain of varied productive trade and industry, is as fortunate in its situation as its tributary country is rich in resources. The mountain-ranges have forced the waters of the entire country to converge at this point, and, here uniting, they have swept a channel to the sea, that has admitted the sea-going vessel to the very borders of the great producing sections at the wharves of Portland. Here the natural channels of trade for the whole country have centred since its first settlement, and of later days railroads have followed them. Here deep-sea navigation ends, but, leading upwards, the diverging streams are navigable for river-steamboats to far into the richest of agricultural districts, and they carry a freight, of products in season, but little less in volume than that of the railroads.

Here Portland was located before the railroads of the Pacific Northwest

were, and to Portland the railroads have come as seeking the natural centre. Down the Willamette Valley come the lines of the Southern Pacific, entering the city from the south. The Union Pacific, following the Columbia, enters the city from the east. The Northern Pacific enters from the north, while the Canadian Pacific and Great Northern find entrance over the tracks of their competitors, and four other roads now under construction promise to add largely to the channels of the city's trade before the close of 1891.

Portland is not alone the greatest, it is the only proper railroad centre on the Pacific coast. San Francisco, though a greater city, is dominated by a single railroad, and its entire territory is reached by lines owned by the one corporation. Portland is the one point whose natural advantages have compelled a division of business, and secured for her merchants the benefit of competition in the carrying-trade by rail, as her water-ways, which laid the foundation of her greatness, have, through all her growth, protected her from railroad combination and monopoly in her tributary territory.

As a general centre of transportation the situation of Portland could hardly be more advantageous. The navigable waters of the Columbia bring to her wharves sea-going vessels of all classes, and open to her the trade of the world, and, though she is but in her infancy as a commercial port, she already has eight distinct lines and systems of ocean traffic, connecting her in trade with Europe, China, Japan, South America, Alaska, British Columbia, and the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States. In her rivers, navigable for steamboats to far into the producing sections, she is unique among all the seaports of the Pacific coast; while the complete railroad system of which she has in the short period of seven years become the centre is now more complete than is practicable at any other point, and gives certain promise of a still more brilliant future.

As a result of the infinite variety and richness of the natural resources of her tributary territory, and the advantages which her location and complete system of transportation lines give her in her position of trade centre, Portland, which, under the United States census of the present year, has, with her suburbs, a population of 69,257, has become the site of a trade and commerce which is greater than that of any other city in the entire country in proportion to its population.

The annual wholesale and jobbing trade of the city amounted for the year 1889 to \$115,000,000, and one-third of this was the result of its growth since 1888, the results for the years 1886, 1887, 1888, and 1889 being as follows:

For 1886 this trade was over	\$50,000,000
" 1887 " " " "	60,000,000
" 1888 " " " "	75,000,000
" 1889 " " " "	115,000,000

The capital at present employed in this trade is about \$65,000,000; this is divided among a large number of houses, but there are 100 employing each a capital exceeding \$200,000, divided as follows:

66 with a capital of	\$200,000 to \$500,000
12 " " " "	500,000 to 1,000,000
22 " " " "	1,000,000 and over.

There are sixteen banks, having a paid-up capital, surplus, and standing deposits as follows:

Capital	\$6,800,000
Surplus and undivided profits	2,678,750
Average standing deposits	11,000,000
Total	\$20,478,750

During the year 1889 the bank capital was increased \$400,000, the surplus \$878,000 (the increase in the latter being in addition to dividends of ten to forty per cent. paid on capital), and there was a considerable addition to the general capital invested in the trade direct; yet so great has been the growth of this trade during the past season, and so far have its demands exceeded the capital at command, that early in the year the banks were obliged to suspend loaning to all but their oldest and best customers, and limit themselves to supplying the most pressing demands of these, and the great want of the city at this time is additional capital in her banking, mercantile, manufacturing, and building interests.

The favorable commercial situation of Portland has thus far borne fruits more in the growth of wealth and culture than in increase in population, and while her 69,000 inhabitants do not entitle her to any very high rank as a city in the matter of population, in her riches, culture, and social life, her mode of living and educational advantages, she has the aspect of a great metropolis. The rapidly-multiplying opportunities for investment and realization are, however, bearing their fruits in the matter of population, which has fully doubled in the last five years. But these opportunities are such as to warrant a far greater growth in the near future, and it is more than probable that within the next five years Portland will more than double her present population, and be in size more nearly what she is as a commercial centre.

The surest guarantee of rapid increase of population is the development of manufacturing industries, for which the infinite resources of the surrounding country afford ample material, and the large trade which Portland has in the manufactured products makes ample demand, and, though hampered here, as elsewhere, by the lack of the capital necessary to meet the demand in full, that Portland has not been unmindful of her opportunities in this respect is shown by the advance which she has made therein during the last five years. In 1886 her manufacturing industries employed 2764 hands and had an output in manufactured product valued at \$5,447,560; in 1889 these industries employed 7862 hands and had an output of \$20,183,044; and it is probable that 1890 will show an increase of more than twenty-five per cent. over 1889.

While it cannot be claimed that either the business-blocks or the private residences are what might reasonably be expected from her position as a commercial centre and the wealth which she has accumulated as such, Portland is a solidly-built city, with well-built business blocks and a number of handsome and comfortable private residences, and, which says more for her general prosperity, with no poor quarter. In public buildings she has done somewhat better than might have been expected from her size and age. In her churches and school-buildings she takes a high rank, and last spring was opened a hotel, built by the citizens at a cost of one million dollars, which is presently the finest on the Pacific coast. At the present time there are under construction a Union Dépôt to cost \$1,000,000, a City Hall to cost \$500,000, a Chamber of

Commerce to cost a like sum, and a Public Library to cost about \$150,000, several fine stone churches and business buildings, and dwellings to the value of several millions of dollars.

The sanitary conveniences of Portland are better than those of any city on the coast, its local transportation facilities of horse, electric, and cable railway lines are equalled only in San Francisco, and its water and sewer systems are complete, serving every part of the city. These advantages of maturity and completeness, not found elsewhere west of the Missouri River, added to the charms of a climate combining the features of the south of England with those of the Mediterranean, an environment of the finest natural scenery on the continent, and a cultured society and superior educational advantages, give to Portland the same high standing as a place of residence that her great commercial and manufacturing interests give her as a place of business and investment.

The conservatism of a commercial and industrial community has thus far prevented a real-estate boom in Portland, but her rapid growth has made an active market in purchases for actual use. In 1889 the number of transfers was 5721, with a consideration of \$14,140,352, and thus far it has been better for the current year. Growth brings a consequent rise in values, and at present low prices no better place for investment could be found than Portland now is.

Those who may desire detailed information as to the city of Portland or the Pacific Northwest may obtain the same without cost, by addressing the Oregon Immigration Board, Portland, Oregon. This board is composed of leading business-men of Portland, has no lands for sale, and does not act as agent for any person or interest, it having been established for the sole purpose of giving reliable information as to the city and the entire country of which the city is the metropolis.

STEEL.—A manufacture which plays, and will increasingly play, so large a part in our national armament and commercial prosperity as steel does, must necessarily have an interest for patriotic Britshers.

It has been a problem with scientists how to formulate a definition of steel that shall be at once accurate and concise. Sir William Siemens gives a good general definition : "Steel is a compound of iron with any other substance which tends to give it superior strength. This definition embraces the various kinds of steel, from the hardest tool-steel down to the softest, and also those compounds in which manganese, tungsten, and chromium replace the carbon of ordinary steel. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to define steel by its mechanical properties. Steel is almost the hardest substance in nature if treated in a certain way; treated in another way it is the most elastic of metals, if not the most elastic substance in nature; and treated in another way it is nearly the most ductile of metals. It is decidedly the strongest substance in nature. Steel is a material of much higher nature than iron. It is much stronger, and can be made to possess nearly any degree of strength, hardness, and ductility, between wide limits, that it is desired to give it."

Steel has an ancient history. Modern discoveries have demonstrated that steel was known to the ancient world fully three thousand years before the Christian era, and there are frequent allusions to it and descriptions of primitive processes in the works of writers down the stream of time,—a history which has been continued in the records of various processes up to the period at which I date the birth of modern steel, about a quarter of a century back.

The methods of steel manufacture in use up to this date were mainly directed to the production of hard steel suitable for edge-tools, bayonets, etc., such being almost the sole purposes to which steel was then applied. But many new uses have since been developed, for which formerly iron was alone employed, such as guns, armor-plates, ship-plates, bridge- and railroad-construction, shafting, etc.,—uses requiring all the varying powers of adaptability which the metal possesses.

In allusion to the comparative softness and hardness of steel, it may be well to mention that steel which will bear a tensile or pulling strain of twenty-five to thirty tons per square inch is called "soft;" that which will stand from thirty to thirty-eight tons' strain, "mild;" and from that to fifty tons and upward, "hard" and "extra hard." Roughly speaking, it is the presence of carbon in greater or less quantities which determines the hardness or softness of steel.—*The Gentleman's Magazine*.

MR. JAMES E. SCRIPPS, senior proprietor of the *Evening News*, has placed the sum of one thousand dollars at the disposal of the trustees of the Detroit Museum of Art to enable them to offer that sum to defray the cost of two years' study in one of the great art schools of Europe as a prize for the greatest proficiency displayed by any pupil in the Detroit Art Academy in the ensuing year. The school opens September 15, and the award will be made at the end of May next. The prize is open to students from all parts of the country. Particulars will be furnished on application to the Secretary, Detroit Museum of Art.—*Detroit Times*.

SINCE 1857 England's small wars have cost her about \$110,000,000. The war with China in 1857-62 cost her \$30,000,000; the Abyssinian expedition in 1867-70, \$41,500,000; the South African war in 1879-80, \$14,000,000; the Nile expedition in 1884-85, \$6,250,000; the Afghan war, between 1880 and 1886, \$15,000,000.